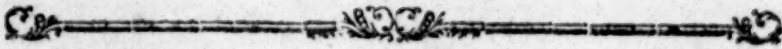


MISCELLANEOUS

T R A C T S.



L O N D O N :

Published and sold for the AUTHOR.

By P. Keating,

(N^o. 4.)

A I R - S T R E E T, *Piccadilly*.

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MISCELLANEOUS
T R A C T S:

B Y

THE REV. ARTHUR O'LEARY.

C O N T A I N I N G,

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>I. <i>A Defence of the Divinity of Christ, and the Immortality of the Soul</i>: in answer to the author of a work, lately published in Cork, entitled, "Thoughts on Nature and Religion." Revised and corrected.</p> <p>II. <i>Loyalty asserted</i>: or, a Vindication of the Oath of Allegiance; with an impartial enquiry into the Pope's TEMPORAL power, and the present claims of the STUARTS to the English throne; proving that both are equally groundless.</p> <p>III. <i>An Address to the common People of Ireland</i>, on occasion of an appre-</p> | <p>hended invasion by the French and Spaniards, in July, 1779, when the united fleets of Bourbon appeared in the Channel.</p> <p>IV. <i>Remarks on a letter written by Mr. Wesley, and a Defence of the Protestant Associations.</i></p> <p>V. <i>Rejoinder to Mr. Wesley's Reply to the above Remarks.</i></p> <p>VI. <i>Essay on Toleration</i>: tending to prove that a man's SPECULATIVE opinions ought not to deprive him of the rights of civil society.</p> |
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In which are introduced,

The Rev. John Wesley's Letter, and the Defence of the
Protestant Associations.

THE SECOND EDITION.

D U B L I N:
PRINTED BY JOHN CHAMBERS.

M.DCC.LXXXI.



TO THE
DIGNITARIES AND BRETHREN
OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF
THE MONKS OF ST. PATRICK.*

Reverend Fathers, and illustrious Brethren,

THE purport of the work which I have the honour to dedicate to your order, is to cement the bands of society; to secure the safety of our country, by union and mutual confidence; to render the subject's allegiance firm, and at the same time reasonable, by establishing it on its proper grounds; to dispel the mists of long-reigning prejudice; after disarming Infidelity, which strikes at the foundation of religion, and the dignity of our nature, to induce the Christians of every denomination to lay aside the destructive weapons which frenzy has so often put into their hands; and, under their peculiar modes of worship, to inspire them

A 3

with

* A society of Nobles and Gentlemen, composed of the greatest orators and writers in Ireland; who, unsolicited, have done the author the honour of adopting him as one of their members.

1057/2

with that benevolence and charity enforced by the first principles of the Law of Nature, and confirmed by the sacred Oracles which they all revere.

In my fugitive pieces, to which the circumstances of the times have given rise, you discovered the sincerity of my designs, in attempting to diffuse to the community at large, the influence of benignity. My feeble efforts have attracted your attention, and procured me the honour of your esteem. With regard to the rights of society, and protection due to the man who does not forfeit them by his misconduct, the learned, the virtuous, the liberal-minded of all denominations, make no distinction; but, with every respect due to religion, leave fanaticism, the noxious vermin that nestles in its wool, to prey upon the ulcered^{at} heads of the bigots. Hence, neither my character of a Catholic Clergyman, which, in these Kingdoms, the prepossession of ignorance has rendered so odious, nor the discountenance of the laws, which doom me to transportation, with the common malefactor, nor the disagreeable circumstances of
of

of a profession still exposed to the wanton lash of every religious persecutor, were deemed a sufficient plea for exclusion from a society composed of so many great and shining men.

Robertson's religion has proved no obstacle to his admission among the Spanish academicians. You, my brethren, have set the brilliant example of philanthropy in this kingdom; and soared far above the sphere of contracted minds. Happy for the world had the gentle voice of Nature been always listened to, and his religion forgotten in the man!

The calamities, of which a contrary conduct has been productive, are slightly glanced at in my treatise on toleration. In the two neighbouring kingdoms, the scenes which have been exhibited last year, are melancholy proofs, that a tolerating spirit, the fair offspring of candour and benevolence, confers happiness on individuals, and gives nations a bloom and vigour which intolerance blasts and enervates. In consequence of the happy change in the dispositions of
the

the people, Ireland has seen her peaceful natives employed in the useful labours of life; her citizens, confident in each other, improving trade and commerce, under a variety of difficulties; her judges respected on their tribunals; and the pleasing scenes of harmony and union spread through every province. Such the result of benevolence! Such the fruits of toleration! Such was our situation, when in Great-Britain nothing could be seen but the course of public justice suspended, and martial law proclaimed; the law and the legislature trampled in their awful sanctuary; the torn canonicals of bishops, the lacerated robes of temporal peers, the streets ensanguined with the streaming blood of deluded victims; sumptuous edifices changed into blazing piles; the conflagration of Rome renewed by the torch of religious frenzy; the houses of inoffensive citizens chalked out for destruction; a city given up to plunder; assassins and malefactors let loose from their chains, and invited, by the hollow voice of fanaticism, to share the spoils; a king on the verge of destruction;

struction; a kingdom on the eve of being plunged into the calamities of civil war; the sword taking the place of the robe, and dictating to the violators of the law; and the stern hand of justice succeeding, in its turn, to the sword, and sweeping from the face of the earth, the gleanings of military execution. Such the poisonous fruits of misguided zeal, and religious intolerance! The seeds of such disasters have been sown in distant times, when barbarity, or the composition of princes, contending for the throne, contributed to divide the people; and, from a mistaken policy, sovereigns themselves, in opposition to the maxims of legislation and wisdom, thought it more eligible to become heads of the half, than the fathers of all their subjects.

Such measures weakened their arms abroad, and will ever prove destructive at home. In every plain the English generals met with their fellow subjects, disputing the laurel, under the banners of kings who gave them encouragement.

The Catholic and Protestant powers on the Continent, by adopting a different

ent plan, and uniting their subjects of every denomination, in the ties of one common interest, strengthened their respective states against the encroachments of each other, and prevented their dominions from being changed a second time; into extensive fields of battle, covered with bodies, fallen by the sword of religious madness; or desolate wastes similar to those from whence restraints and distress have banished the human species: the present Emperor's mother restored her Christian subjects of every denomination, to the freedom and rights of citizens. The son has opened his calm bosom to the Jew, and is become the father of the man who blasphemes the Saviour whom his sovereign adores. Ireland! Ireland, where the Protestant gentleman gives alms to the pilgrim without enquiring into his religion, and where the Catholic peasant presses his distressed fellow creature, to take share of a handful of vegetables, scarce sufficient to support his own wretched existence:——Ireland, whose generous sons have more compassion and feelings for the stranger, than
their

their neighbours for the brothers of their blood---Ireland, where some strokes given by a peer of the realm, to a poor inoffensive priest in the last stage of a decay, which in a few days rescued him from the miseries of this life, “ the law’s delay, “ and the proud man’s contumely”---Ireland, where this scene raised such indignation in the generous breast of every Protestant, that a lawyer*, who to the powers of the orator joins the courage of the hero, without fee or reward, pleaded for obscurity against eminence, for weakness against power, and, after asserting the rights of humanity at the bar, went to encounter death in the field for a helpless client, in the last struggles of the agony---Ireland, so famous for the generous sentiments of her inhabitants, is the devoted spot, where out of a million and half of subjects, not one can become a coal measurer,—a common soldier,—an excise-man,—nor have more than two apprentices at a time! Their Dissenting brethren, so humane in their private characters, and the professors of whose religion are so tolerant in Holland and Switzerland,

erland, consider their Catholic neighbours as so many slaves ready to cut their throats, at the first signal given by their royal masters, without whose concurrence the chain could never have been fastened to their bodies. The kings of England on the other hand, whose treasury would be better supplied by opulent subjects than by a million of naked and famished objects, are obliged at an enormous expense, to hire foreign mercenaries of every religion, with their respective chaplains, whilst their dauntless subjects are forced to throw themselves into the arms of those sovereigns who pay them for fighting, and permit them to pray as they think fit. Thus government is distressed on one hand, and the kingdom is deprived of its strength and internal resources on the other. The Catholics, between their fellow subjects and the throne, are like the forlorn hope between two armies. They are doomed to civil destruction between both.

Europe will soon bear a different aspect: and the examples set by those princes, who, for the aggrandizement of their states, are doing away all religious distinction

distinctions, are so many warnings to copy after them. The Gauls, the Romans, the Carthaginians, thought themselves once invincible. Their divisions precipitated their downfall. No oracle has as yet declared that foreign candidates for glory and conquest will be deterred from attempting to become our masters. The power to resist becomes greater in proportion to the number of the subjects: In proportion to the stake they have to defend, their attachment to their country, their attachment to each other. A small state, rich, populous, and well united, is preferable to a large but divided kingdom. Let religious distinctions, then, be laid aside. It is equal to the Israelite, released from bondage, whether his temple be built by Solomon or Cyrus; provided he has liberty to pray unmolested, and to sleep under his vine and fig-tree. Diseases,—sickness,—death, which mows down the young and old,—emigrations,—the waste of war,—countries, now unknown, which will be hereafter discovered,—colonies that ever and always depopulate the parent-state,—rising empires,—and princes inviting strangers to settle in their dominions,—will
leave

leave land enough in Ireland, to the end of time, for ten times the number of its inhabitants.

The world is in a continual change. New monarchs sway the sceptre. New ministers direct their councils. New characters are daily mounting the stage of life, to become the objects of the applause, derision, or censure of mankind. Every new generation is a new world, raised on the ruins of the former, aiming at their present advantages, without any retrospect to past transactions, in which they are noways concerned. We frequently change our bodies. Reason on its travels from age to age, acquires a new mode of thinking. In a word, every thing is liable to change; and it is high time to change from division to union.

Let not religion, the sacred name of religion, which even in the face of an enemy discovers a brother, be any longer a wall of separation to keep us asunder: though it has been often perverted to the worst of purposes, yet it is easy to reconcile it with every social blessing.

In

In the course of this work, I intend to make Toleration a citizen of the world, instead of confining it to one kingdom or province. I am not an able, neither am I a partial advocate. I plead for the Protestant in France, and for the Jew in Lisbon, as well as for the Catholic in Ireland. In future ages should fanaticism attempt to re-establish her destructive empire, and, crying out with the frantic queen, "*exoriare aliquis ex ossibus nostris,*" summon the furies to spring from her embers, which I attempt to disperse and deprive of their noxious heat, let this votive offering, hung up in the temple of the Order of the Monks of St. Patrick, announce to posterity, that in seventeen hundred and eighty one, the liberal-minded of all denominations in Ireland, were reconciled, maugre the odious distinctions which the laws uphold, and that those very laws, enacted before we were born, but not the dispositions of the people, are the only sources of our misfortunes.

Whatever tends to promote the public good, is a tribute due from an adopted brother, to great and illustrious characters,

ters, whose refined feelings can only be equalled by the culture of their minds : Who have transplanted to the Irish nursery the flowers of Rome and Athens : Who in their writings and speeches, have displayed to Europe the scene of eloquence, diversified with the fire of Demosthenes and the majesty of Tully, and wrested their thunderbolts from those orators, in order to assert what they deemed the rights of mankind, to crush the false divinities that should attempt to erect their altars on their ruins.

I have the honour to be,

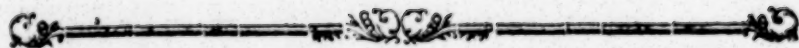
Reverend fathers, and

Illustrious brethren,

Your affectionate brother,

Dublin, July 15,
1781.

ARTHUR O'LEARY.



A

D E F E N C E

OF THE

DIVINITY OF CHRIST,

AND THE

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL,

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS,

TO THE AUTHOR OF A WORK

ENTITLED

Thoughts on Nature and Religion.

Published at Cork, in the Year M,DCC,LXXVI.



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L E T T E R I.

T O T H E A U T H O R.*

S I R,

YO U R long-expected performance has at last made its appearance. If the work tended to promote the happiness of society,—to animate our hopes,—to subdue our passions,—to instruct man in the happy science of purifying the polluted recesses of a vitiated heart,—to confirm him in his exalted notion of the dignity of his nature, and thereby to inspire him with sentiments averse to whatever may debase the excellence of his origin,—the public would be indebted to you ; your name would be recorded amongst the assertors of morality and religion ; and I myself, though bred up in a different persuasion from yours, would be the first

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to

* A Scotch physician, who styles himself Michael Servetus.

to offer my incense at the shrine of merit. But the tendency of your performance is to deny the Divinity of Christ, and the immortality of the soul. In denying the first, you sap the foundations of religion; you cut off, at one blow, the merit of our faith, the comfort of our hope, and the motives of our charity. In denying the immortality of the soul, you degrade human nature, and confound man with the vile and perishable insect. In denying both, you overturn the whole system of religion, whether natural or revealed. And in denying religion, you deprive the poor of the only comfort which supports them under their distresses and afflictions; you wrest from the hands of the powerful and rich, the only bridle to their injustices and passions; and pluck from the hearts of the guilty, the greatest check to their crimes,—I mean, this remorse of conscience, which can never be the result of a handful of organized matter,—this interior monitor which makes us blush, in the morning, at the disorders of the foregoing night!—which erects in the breast of the tyrant, a tribunal superior to his power,—and whose importunate voice upbraids a Cain, in the wilderness, with the murder of his brother,—and a Nero, in his palace, with that of his mother. Such the consequences naturally resulting from the principles laid down in your writings.

It

It is no intention of mine to fasten the odium of wilful infidelity on any person, who professes his belief of the scriptures; though I am equally concerned and surprized that a gentleman, whose understanding has been enlightened by the Christian revelation, and enlarged by all the aids of human learning, should broach tenets, which equally militate against the first principles of reason, and the oracles of the Divinity, and which if true would be of no service to mankind. Whoever is so unhappy as to work himself into a conviction, that his soul is no more than a subtle vapour, which in death is to be breathed out into the air, to mix confusedly with its kindred element, and there to perish, would still do well to conceal his horrid belief with more secrecy than the Druids concealed their mysteries. In doing otherwise he only brings disgrace on himself; for the notion of religion is so deeply impressed on our minds, that the bold champions who would fain destroy it, are considered by the generality of mankind, as public pests, spreading disorder and mortality wherever they appear; and in our feelings we discover the delusions of a cheating Philosophy, which can never introduce a religion more pure than that of the Christians, nor confer a more glorious privilege on man, than that of an immortal soul. In a word, if it be a crime
to

to have no religion, it is a folly to boast of the want of it.

Whence then this eagerness to propagate systems, the tendency whereof is to slacken the reins that curb the irregularity of our appetites, and restrain the impetuosity of passion? In our dogmatizing philosophers, it must proceed from the corruption of the heart, averse to restraint; or the vanity of the mind, which glories in striking from the common path, and not thinking with the multitude.

Your unspotted character, justifies you from any imputation of a design to infect others with the poison of a licentious doctrine: but vanity is one of those foreign ingredients, blended by the loss of original justice into our nature. It prefers *glorious* vices to obscure virtues. It animates the hero to extend his conquests at the expense of justice; and stimulates the philosopher to erect the banners of error on the ruins of truth. You seem to acknowledge it in your enquiries into the causes of error: "It was vanity in philosophers which caused so many different sects and systems." I believe it. Montaigne was of the same opinion. Immersed in an ocean of disorders, glorying in appearance, in an utter extinction of remorse, and conversant with the doctrine taught in Epicurus's garden, he acknowledges that *vanity induces*

duces Free-thinkers to affect more impiety than they are really capable of. Lucretius in like manner, whose arguments against the immortality of the soul are the same with yours, corroborates your opinion, relative to the bias *vanity* gives those soaring and philosophical geniuses, who strike from the trodden path. When in glowing numbers he enforced his fond opinion of careless Gods and material souls, as favourable to the calm repose which the voluptuous bard, who makes his invocation to Venus, would vainly enjoy without remorse here, or punishment hereafter, he was well aware that his doctrine clashed with the general sense of mankind. But the philosophical poet consoles himself, with the flattering expectation of gratifying his vanity.

“ ’Tis sweet to crop fresh flowers, and get a crown,

“ For new and rare inventions of my own.”

CREECH’S LUCRETIUS.

In a word, some men of learning plume themselves upon the singularity of their opinions; and however they may disclaim vanity, as the spring of their literary performances, yet it is one of those ingredients which gives a zest to their compositions. And if singularity and novelty of invention, be stimulatives to self-love, few authors of the age are more bound to guard against this dangerous and agreeable poison,

son, than the author of the *Thoughts on nature and religion*.

To range those singularities under their proper heads, is almost impossible; and modesty does not permit to transcribe from your book several passages of your allegorical commentary, on the second chapter of Genesis. *The coat of skins, then, with which God covered the man and woman after their fall, as well as the fruit so pleasing to the eye, which the woman tasted*, I leave the Doctor in full possession of. He is a married man, and skilled in the anatomy of all *parts* of the body*.

After giving his readers the important information, that Adam was displeased with his wife, for inducing him to a *faux pas*, which I believe no married man (except Adam, if we believe the Doctor) ever scrupled, he allegorizes some of the rest of the chapter in the following manner: "God planted a garden eastward in "Eden," says the inspired writer, "and there "he put them an whom he had formed". "What "is called a garden," says the Doctor, "I take "to be the human mind. By the river which "watered the garden, and afterwards divided "into four branches, is meant innocence di-
"vided

* The Rabbins never composed such a shocking commentary. Modest ignorance is preferable to licentious learning.

"vide into the four cardinal virtues." Here he loses breath, for to allegorize all would be too tedious, and doubtless the public have room to regret the Doctor's omission in not continuing the allegory to the end of the chapter.

He professes his belief in the scriptures, but has the good luck to elude every difficulty which falls in his way, by the assistance of metaphors, and thinks himself the more authorized to take this freedom with Moses, as he discovers a mistake in the Bible. "I will strike Egypt," saith the Lord, from the tower of Syene to "the borders of Ethiopia. *Ezekiel.*" "Instead of Ethiopia," says the Doctor, "it should be Arabia, for Syene was situated on "the borders of Ethiopia."

Pray, Doctor, does a mistake in geography on the part of the translators of the Bible, invalidate the Mosaical account of man's innocence, together with his felicity in Paradise; the malice of the tempting spirit, and his appearance under the form of a serpent; the fall of Adam and Eve, fatal to all their posterity; the first man justly punished in his children, and mankind cursed by God; the first promise of redemption, and the future victory of men over the Devil who had undone them? Has not the memory of those great events; and the
fatal!

fatal transition from original justice to the corruption of sin, been preserved in the golden and iron ages of the poets, their Hesperian gardens watched by dragons, and in the enchantments and worship of idolatrous nations, in whose incantations and superstitions, the serpent always bore, as it bears still, a principal part. Allegorize Moses as much as you please; he relates that God promised that *the woman's offspring would crush the serpent's head*. This very promise of a Redeemer, and man's victory through his grace, are foretold in the oracles of the Gentiles. Even Tacitus, though a mortal enemy to the Jews and Christians, acknowledges, that it was a constant tradition amongst the Oriental nations, that from the Jews would spring a conqueror, who would subdue the world. A translator's mistake as to the name of a town or tower, is no plea for scepticism, especially as there are and have been, several towns of the same name in different places, which might have been the case with *Syene*; and cities which in a long succession of time, have changed their names, or born different names at the same time, as is the case with Constantinople, which the Turks call Stamboul, and others Byzantium.

But let us suppose that the tower of *Syene* was situated on the same line, in an opposite direction,

direction, with the frontiers of Ethiopia, is there any impropriety in saying, "I will strike Egypt" "from the tower of Syene to the borders of" "Ethiopia?" Solinus relates, that there was a tower called *Syene* in lower Egypt. Ethiopia borders Egypt on the south. In striking Egypt, then, from the tower of Syene to the borders of Ethiopia, it is struck from north to south: that is, from one extremity to the other. The doctor, then, has lost his time in correcting the prophet Ezechiel's map, and substituting Arabia for Ethiopia. Yet this passage of Ezechiel is his chief plea for allegorizing Genesis: with what success let the reader judge.

A warm fancy, in a paroxysm of zeal, may indulge its boundless excursions in the path of allegory, when obscure passages and mystical expressions open a field for interpretations and allusions. Mead, Whiston, Wesley, and the doctor himself, may discover the pope in the beast with ten horns; and Rome in the great city built on seven hills. The Jewish rabbins, after obtaining permission to build a synagogue from the prince of Orange, applied to their benefactor, this famous passage of Isaiah: "On" "that day, seven women will take hold of one" "man:" alluding to the Seven United Provinces that had elected him stadtholder: and I myself,

myself, if I were in humour, could, in a long-winded discourse, enlarge upon the seven sacraments, or the three theological and four cardinal virtues; and compare them to the seven golden candlesticks mentioned in the revelations of St. John. But in a historical narration, giving an account of the origin of the world,—of a garden planted with trees, watered with four rivers,—with their names,—the countries through which they flow,—the precious stones, mines and minerals, to be found in those countries, &c—the introduction of an allegory is the subversion of reason.

Even where allegories can be used with any propriety, our masters in rhetoric lay down as a rule, “that, in the chain of metaphors continued through the discourse, aptness, resemblance, and justness of allusion, must be strictly observed.” What justness of allusion is there between the *human mind*, and a *garden planted eastward in Eden*, where God put the man whom he had created? As much as there is in saying, *God made man, and placed him eastward in his mind*. What analogy is there between the *four rivers* and the *four cardinal Virtues*? Between *fortitude* and *Pison* or the *Ganges*, with the effeminate natives that inhabit its banks? Between *prudence* and the *Euphrates*?
Justice

Justice and *Gibon* or the *Nile*, with its crocodiles? *Temperance* and *Hiddekel* or the *Tygris*, which, as *Moses* relates, and as geography informs us, goeth towards the east of *Assyria*, a country famous in former days for the *intemperance* of its inhabitants? The four cardinal virtues being set afloat on the four rivers, and the doctor's imagination having spent the fire of his allegory, we are at a loss what virtue to describe by the onyx-stone, mentioned by *Moses* in the following words: "The name of the first river is *Pison*; that is it which compasseth the land of *Havilah*, where there is gold: and the gold of that land is good: and there is *bdellium* and the onyx-stone." By *gold*, doubtless, he must mean *charity* or *patience*. But of the *onyx-stone* there are four kinds: and we would be obliged to our dogmatizing philosophers for describing their four correspondent virtues.

Let them inform us, in like manner, whether the *bdellium* mentioned by *Moses*, be one of the *theological* or a branch of the *cardinal* virtues. For though in dispensatories, the *bdellium* be allowed to be a good nostrum of an emollient and discutient quality, yet the learned, whether commentators of scripture or natural philosophers, are no more agreed about the true nature of *bdellium*, than they are about the manner

manner how it is produced : and it is much doubted whether the bdellium of the ancients be the same with the modern kind.

Thus, in the disputes about a drop of gum resin, the nature and production whereof perplex the most learned, we discover the weakness of human reason. We cannot dissect a fly; and we would fain comprehend the ways of Providence. We would fain sound the unfathomable ocean of the Christian religion, and arraign its mysteries at the tribunal of a glimmering reason, when the small atom that swims on the surface, baffles our severest scrutiny.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ARTHUR O'LEARY.

LETTER

L E T T E R II.

S I R,

TO our modern philosophers, who set up the proud idols of their own fancies in opposition to the oracles of the Divinity,—and, endeavouring to discover absurdities in the Christian religion, fall into greater,—we can, without disclaiming our title to good manners, apply what St. Paul applied to the philosophers of his time: “They became vain in their imaginations: professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” In order to sap the foundations of revealed religion,—and to make man the sport of chance, who neither lost any privilege by Adam’s fall, nor gained any thing by Christ’s redemption,—they endeavour to obtrude Moses on the public as an allegorical writer. Examine his character, and acknowledge their folly.

Besides his divine mission, in what historian does truth shine more conspicuous? He relates his personal defects, as well as the extraordinary powers with which the Lord invested him; deduces a long chain of patriarchs from the first man down to his days; traces a genealogy, in
which

which every chief is distinguished by his peculiar character. In quitting Egypt, the nursery of fiction, did it comport with the dignity of the legislator and commander of a chosen people, to write romances? In the space of five hundred years, from Noah's death to Moses' time, could the fall of man and his expulsion from Paradise be forgotten? And, as he had enemies, would not they have charged him with imposture? Or was he the only person amongst the Jews, who was instructed by his father? In a word, it was out of his power to deceive the Jews; much less was it his inclination or interest. All, then, is coherent in Moses: and to his genuine narrative we are indebted for the knowledge of ourselves: for, without the aid of revelation, man would ever be an inexplicable mystery.

In believing my descent from a father created in a state of perfection, from whence he fell, —a father on whose obedience or disobedience my happiness or misery depended,—I can account for the corruption of my nature, and all the train of evils which have descended to Adam's children. Without this clew to direct me, I must be for ever entangled in a labyrinth of perplexities. Let philosophy glory in leveling man with the brute, and say that there was never any difference in his state; that he
was

was always the same, destined to gratify his appetites, and to die ;——I am really persuaded that I must renounce common sense, if I believe that man is now the same that he was in coming from his Maker's hands. The opposition between our passions and reason is too palpable, to believe that we were created in such an excess of contradictions. Reason dictates to be temperate, just, and equitable ; to deal with others as I would fain be dealt by ; not to infringe the order of society ; to pity and relieve the afflicted : my passions, those tyrants so cruel, prompt me to raise myself on the ruin of others ; to tread in the flowery paths of criminal pleasures ; and to sacrifice my enemy to my resentment. If God, then, be the author of reason,——and that it is granted to man to regulate and curb his inclinations,——misery and corruption were not our primitive state.

Philosophers, in a strain of irony, may deride our Bible and catechism, and laugh at our folly for believing that an apple could entail such miseries on mortals : but let them seriously consider the multitude and greatness of the evils that oppress us ; and how full of vanity, of illusions, of sufferings, are the first years of our lives ; when we are grown up, how we are seduced by error, weakened by pain, inflamed

by lust, cast down by sorrow, elated with pride:—and ask themselves whether the cause of those dreadful evils be the injustice of God or the original sin of man.

The evidence of those miseries forced the pagan philosophers to say, that we were born only to suffer the punishment we had deserved for crimes committed in a life before this. They, doubtless, were deceived as to the origin and cause of our miseries: but still some glimmering of reason did not permit them to consider those calamities as the natural state of man. But religion reforms the error, and points out, that this heavy yoke, which the sons of Adam were forced to bear, from the time that their bodies are taken from their mother's womb, to the day that they are to return to the womb of their common mother, the Earth, would not have been laid upon them, if they had not deserved it, by the guilt they contract from their origin.

But religion, as far as it includes mysteries, you think yourself at liberty to discard: because you “cannot conceive how God could
“require of man, a belief of any thing which
“he has not endowed him with powers to
“conceive.”* Hence you reject the mystery
of

* Thoughts on Nature and Religion, page 127.

of the Trinity, as an invention of the clergy; borrowed from the poetical fable of the three brothers, Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto; the Divinity of Christ, as an imposition of the Church; and the immortality of the soul, as the fruit of scholastic subtlety.

You think the religion of nature a sufficient guide, and prefer Socrates and Cato to the clergy of the Christian religion. The great Cato, whom you applaud for his *bon mot* when he said, that he was surprized *how two priests could meet without bursting out into a fit of laughter*. Do not confide too much, my dear Sir, *in reason and this boasted law of nature*, which formed an Aristides, a Socrates, a Cato whom you applaud *for laughing at priests*. Whatever tricks or juggles might have been played in the recesses of the Capitol, where the Sibylline oracles were deposited, to answer the purposes of state,—to animate the people to war, from an expectation of success, under the protection of Jupiter or Apollo,—and to support the pride and policy of Roman grandeur;—the priests of the Christian religion do not conceal their belief. Cato might laugh in seeing his colleague, for reasons best known to themselves: and doubtless, the priest, who came to the Roman lady with a message from Apollo, informing her that the God intended to honour her that

night with his company, by sleeping with her in his temple, laughed heartily in seeing the young gentleman who bribed him to the cheat, and the more so, as on the day following the lady gave the public to understand, that however great Apollo might have been, in his quality of God, honoured with altars and temples, he had nothing extraordinary in his quality of companion. Cato's *priests* then might have laughed in seeing one another; the mysteries and rites of their Gods, as debauched and corrupt as themselves, afforded scenes of impure mirth: and the Christian clergy are obliged to the Doctor for putting them and the three *brothers*, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, whom they worship, on a level with the heathen priests and their Jupiter, who ravished Ganymedes, Neptune and his sea nymphs, and Pluto, who carried off Proserpina.

In spite of the preference, given by the doctor to Cato and Socrates, over the Christian clergy, and the sufficiency of the law of nature to regulate the conduct of man, we can assure him, that under the direction of a Christian mother who never *studied philosophy*, a child imbibes sublimer notions of the Divinity, and purer ideas of virtue than Plato ever taught in the academy, or Aristotle in the Lyceum. What were those boasted sages whom our modern

Free-

Free-thinkers so often introduce on the stage, as paragons of wisdom, in order to play the dazzling glass in the eyes of the unwary, by making reason their only oracle, and painting religion as priest-craft? Some doubted of their own existence, and consequently of the existence of a God. Some figured to themselves an indolent God, who never concerned himself in the affairs of mortals, equally indifferent about vice or virtue; who, to use the words of Lucretius,

“Ne’er smiles at good, ne’er frowns at wicked deeds.”

Some considered the Supreme Being as the slave of destiny. Others as incorporate with the universe, and a part of a world which is the work of his hand.

What extravagant notions concerning the nature of the soul! In one school it was an assemblage of atoms; in another it was subtle air; in a third school it was a *something* which after its separation from one body entered into another; roaming from heaven to earth and from earth to heaven, without any permanent abode; alternately swaying the sceptre of authority in the hands of the monarch, and animating the body of a beast of burden. Their great remedy against the terrors of death, consisted in a false but flattering way of reasoning.

“Either the soul dies with the body, or survives
“it. If it dies with the body it cannot suffer. If

“it

“it survives it, it will be happy.” Not reflecting that the horrors of sin, and infinite justice, may appoint an intermediate state, wherein man is eternally miserable. Hence all the reins were slackened, and the most abominable crimes honoured with priests, altars and temples. Public worship became a public prostitution. Incest, impurity, drunkenness, hatred, pride, were deified under the fictitious names of Jupiter, Juno, Venus, Mars, &c. and criminal Gods were worshipped with crimes.

It was not the mountain inhabited by the rude and uncivilized, which alone was polluted with the smoak of profane incense: the nations most renowned for learning and refinement,—Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians,—in the midst of their cities, saw sumptuous edifices consecrated to the passions which the gospel condemns. By their mistakes and errors, it is easy to perceive the weakness of reason, and the necessity of revealed religion.

Your Philosophers, whom our Modern Free-thinkers are ever extolling, with a view to degrade the Christian religion and its ministers, never escaped the general contagion. Your Cato, besides suicide, was guilty of levities of a *softer nature* than the steel with which he killed himself. Your Socrates, whom you would fain

fain obtrude on the ignorant, as a *martyr to truth and the original religion of nature*, acknowledges in his defence, that he worshipped the Gods of his city, and was seen on public festivals sacrificing at their altars. His wrestling naked with his pupil, Alcibiades, was an attitude ill-suited to the character of a man, entitled to a place in the calendar of saints. What shall I say of the Cynics, who laid aside all the natural restraints of shame and modesty? Of Chrysippus, the advocate of inter-marriages between fathers and daughters? Of the Persian Magi, who married their mothers? Of Seneca, playing the moralist in public, debauching his sovereign's wife in private, and preferring his pretended wife man to God himself? What shall I say of the *divine Plato*, who annihilates the institution of connubial ties? who by introducing a community of women, and refusing the husband any exclusive property in the marriage bed, would fain introduce a horrid confusion amongst men; confound all paternal rights, which nature itself respected, and people his republic with inhabitants, uncertain of their origin; without tenderness, affection, or humanity: Whereas in such a state it would have been impossible for the son to know his father.

Such is the boasted *reason* you take for your guide, and lo, the great luminaries it has produced!

duced! A set of proud men, bewildered in a labyrinth of the most monstrous errors. If our modern philosophers are more refined than those antient sages, it is to the Christian religion, which they would fain overthrow, to the writings of its doctors, whom they deride, and to the first principles of a Christian education, which they cannot entirely forget, that they are indebted for their superiority.

Before revealed religion dispelled the mist, reason was overspread with error, in the breasts of the greatest men. It is no more than a bare capacity to be instructed; an engine veering at every breath; equally disposed to minister to vice as well as to virtue, according to the variety and customs of different climates. It did not hinder the Egyptian from worshipping leeks and onions, nor the Athenian, Socrates, from offering a cock to Eiculapius.

But is man to be debarred the use of his reason? or has he any thing to dread for not believing mysteries he cannot comprehend? Make full use of your reason, not with a design to fall into scepticism, but with a sincere desire to come at the knowledge of the truth. Reason is never better employed than in discovering the will of its author: and when once we discover that it is his will we should believe, reason itself suggests

gests that it is our duty to submit; otherwise we are guilty of rebellion against the first of sovereigns: and to deny his power to punish the disobedience of his creatures, is more than you have attempted.

This important enquiry should be attended with a pure heart and fervent prayer. However a philosopher may laugh at the hint, *as Cato would laugh if he met a priest*. It was after a fervent prayer Solomon received his wisdom: after a fervent prayer Cornelius the Centurion obtained the privilege of becoming the first convert from amongst the Gentiles. Even the heathen, Democritus, who figured so much amongst the literati of his time, constantly prayed the Gods to send him good images. Religion would not seem so absurd, the number of Free-thinkers would not be so great, if we made it our business to purify the heart, and earnestly to beg of the Divinity to enlighten our understandings. For the passions of the heart, and too much confidence in ourselves, pave the way for the errors of the mind. Solomon became dissolute and voluptuous before he fell into Idolatry. We ever and always lose our innocence before we laugh at our catechism.

But a philosopher requires argument, and leaves prayer to the vulgar. Reason is too precious

cious a gift to be offered at the shrine of religion: yet from St. Paul, to whom the Roman governor said that too much learning had turned his head, down to John Locke, the great historian of the human understanding, the greatest men the world ever produced, have believed mysteries beyond their comprehension. They all knew that God cannot lie, nor deceive mortals, but that man is liable to error. If then my reason discovers, that the motives of credibility are sufficient to induce me to believe, that God has proposed such and such a doctrine; the same reason immediately whispers, *believe your God, for he can do more than you can comprehend.*

In denying mysteries, because we cannot comprehend them, we may as well deny our existence. For our very existence is a mystery we can never comprehend. How many valves and springs, how many veins and arteries, what an assemblage of bones, muscles, canals, juices, nerves, fluids, tubes, vessels, requisite to make that frail being called man? Great partizans of *nature and reason* (words often used to veil your ignorance), take a handful of dust and shape it into the figure of a man, bore the veins and arteries, lay the sinews and tendons, fit the joints and blow into its nostrils your
philosophical

philosophical breath, make it move, walk, speak, concert plans, form schemes; make it susceptible of love, fear, joy, hope, desire, &c. then we will recognize your comprehensive knowledge of the imperceptible progress, and divine mechanism of the human frame. For the formation of each of us is as wonderful as the formation of the first. Your very bodies of which you are so fond, are *mysteries* in which your reason is lost; and you would fain have a religion which proposes nothing but what your reason comprehends. Thousands of years elapsed before Hervey discovered the circulation of the blood. Thousands will elapse before the delicate texture of the human frame is known.

Disengage yourselves, if you can, from the impenetrable folds and darkneses of your own frames. Take a survey of all the objects that surround you, you plunge into an abyss overspread with darkness and obscurity. Explain to us how one and the same water paints and dyes the different flowers into various colours, the pink, the lily, the tulip, the rose; or how from an inodorous earth they draw their sweet perfumes! The cell of the bee, which that little insect makes according to the nicest rules of geometry, without studying the mathematics, and in the construction whereof, the curious have observed all the advantages which geometers derive

rive from Newton's doctrine of fluxions, the minima and maxima, and the extraordinary contrivance, whereby a less quantity of surface is sufficient to contain a given quantity of honey, which saves that creature much wax and labour. The cell of the bee,—the granary of the ant,—the heart, lungs, liver, &c. of the mite,—baffle your learned researches.

From the immense bodies swimming in the azure fluid above, to the blade of grass which springs under your feet, every thing is a *mystery* to man.

If you range in the boundless region of the abstract sciences, what a fathomless ocean of truths which you must acknowledge, without comprehending! Lines eternally drawing near to each other, without ever meeting! Motion for ever slackening, without ever coming to a point of rest! The infinite divisibility of matter, whereby a small grain of wheat incloses in itself as many parts (though lesser in proportion) as the whole world! The smallest part of the same grain containing another world, and the least part of that part, as small, with respect to the grain, as the grain is, with respect to the entire frame of the universe, and so on, to infinity!

If,

If, then, the vigour of our wit must yield to an atom of matter, is it not an abuse of reason, to refuse our assent to truths propounded by an All-wise and Omnipotent Being, only because they are above our conception?

If nature be, then, a mysterious book, closed up with a seven-fold seal, is it not presumption and blindness in man, not to submit to unerring wisdom? Revealed religion once secluded, a faint light and lame kind of liberty would be our boasted privilege. Wounded man could never find, in his reason, sufficient light to discover the truths of eternal life; nor in his liberty, sufficient strength to follow their dictates. Like the bleeding traveller, on the road of Jericho, he stands in need of the assistance of some foreign and healing hand.

“It is none of his fault,” says St. Austin, who had himself been a proud and voluptuous philosopher, “if he cannot make use of his broken limbs: but he is guilty, if he despises the physician who proffers to cure him: and he is humbly to acknowledge his weakness, to obtain help. This assistance is ministered, not by the law of nature, but by the *tree of life*, who says of himself: I am the vine: you are the branches: without me, you cannot do any thing.”

The

The two fatal springs of our evils, are—the error of the mind, and the infirmity of the will. In Him we find the remedy,—the light of revelation to dispel our darkness, and his enlivening grace to purify the heart. You are ready to acknowledge him as the divine and inexhaustible fountain of both, if once some passages, which, in your opinion, militate against his Divinity, could be reconciled. An attempt shall be made in my next letter.

I have the honour, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R I I I.

S I R,

AN incarnate God, whose bleeding wounds have paid our ransom, is one of those mysteries that stuns and disconcerts human reason, liable to stray through the winding paths of roving error, if the clew of faith do not direct our steps and minister its assistance. He appeared on earth to cancel our crimes; to nail to the cross the schedule of our condemnation; to lacerate and tear the woful hand-writing that gave us over to rebel-angels; to snatch sinful man from the hands of divine justice; and to unlock the awful gates of the eternal sanctuary, whither no mortal has access, but through the blood of the spotless pontiff. He appeared, in fine, to raise, through his merits, all those who fell by Adam's guilt; to form a faithful and holy people,—a faithful people, “by captivating their understanding to the yoke of faith,”—and a holy people, whose conversation, according to St. Paul, ought to be in Heaven; and who are to follow no longer the dictates of the flesh.

Our

Our ignorance of his nature would expose us to the fatal alternative—either of becoming idolaters in worshipping a man, which is the case of all Christians, if your opinion be well grounded, —or of refusing God the homage that is due to him, which is your case, if you mistake and err. If Christ be not God, the Christians are in the same case with the idolatrous Tartars, who worship a living man: and if he be God above all, and blessed for ever, you may as well believe the Alcoran, as believe the scriptures; and invoke Mahomet, as invoke the son of Mary. He declares, “that life eternal consists in the “knowledge of Himself, and of the Father “who sent him.” In such an important article, it is too hazardous to plead ignorance, in hopes of impunity: for the scripture says, that “there “is a way which man thinks to be the right “one: and the end thereof are the ways of “death.” The Divinity of Christ, evidenced by the accomplishment of so many oracles, and supported by the concurrent testimonies of all nations and ages, since his appearance on earth, has so many apologists, that the doctor can easily meet with some of them in every library, and, I doubt not, in his own; and that it were presumption in me to attempt going over the same ground; especially, after what Abadie and Houteville have said on this important subject. Moreover, sir, you acknowledge the authenticity

city of the scriptures; and found your doubts, either on the obscurity of some passages, or the misapplication of some prophecies, or the numberless texts, relating to Christ's humanity. In this walk, I take the liberty of attending you, step by step; and shall avoid, as much as possible, any long digression; lest we may stray too far from the path.

O B S C U R I T Y.

You affirm, that the first chapter of St. John, in which the Divinity of Christ is asserted, "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; and the Word was God;" is intricate and obscure. It is quite the reverse; and Christ's Divinity cannot be read in more legible characters. You understand by the *Word*, "the Man Jesus, whom God raised up in time, and to whom God imparted extraordinary gifts." In understanding by the *Word*, the *Man Jesus*, you are in similar circumstances with king Agrippa, who said: "Paul, Paul, you have made me almost a Christian." You would be entirely a Christian, if you added to "the Man Jesus, whom God raised up in time," *the God Jesus, who was begotten from eternity*: according to the saying of the psalmist, "Before the morning-star I have begotten thee:"—words which

D

Christ

Christ applies to himself. Or you understand by the foregoing words, "In the beginning was "the Word," &c. *truth and righteousness, co-eternal with the Divinity.* Permit me to tell you, that you explain one obscurity by another; and that, notwithstanding all your shifts, either the evangelist did not know what he was saying, or you must absolutely allow an eternal and pre-existent principle, united to human nature, "in "the fulness of time."

To prove what I advanced, I shall adopt your interpretation, and place *Truth* in the room of *Word*. "In the beginning was the "*Truth*: and the *Truth* was with God: and "*God was the Truth.*" Remark, here, that *God* and the *Truth* are identified:—*God was the Truth.* In the same chapter, it is said: "The "Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst "us." In adopting your interpretation, it will be—"The *Truth* was made flesh, and dwelt "amongst us," viz. the same *Truth* of which he said before, that it was God himself,—and then the entire sense will be—*God, the Truth, was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us.* Upon the whole, you are to acknowledge an eternal, pre-existent principle, assuming human nature; or to reject this chapter as supposititious, which no Arian or Socinian ever did.

You

You accuse the English translators of some design, in transposing these words, *καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος*, "And God was the Word," which they have Englished, "And the Word was God," as if they intended to promote the Christian cause by an artful transposition.

I see no advantage you can derive from so severe and injurious an intimation. Whether we say, "God was the Word," or "the Word was God," the sense is the same: for, in all languages, it is the nature of the copulative verb (is) to identify the predicate and the subject, if it be not followed by some exclusive particle or negative word. *Peter was or is that man*: transpose the words, and such will be the result of the transposition: *that man was or is Peter*. The sense is the same in both cases: and the same may be said, and is true, whether we say, "God was the Word," or "the Word was God."

This chapter is as clear as the first chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Colossians, wherein he sets forth and extols the qualities of our divine Redeemer, "by whom were made all things in Heaven and on earth, visible and invisible; whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and in him: and he is before all: and all things subsist in him."*

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* Verse 16, 17.

If all things, that are, were made by him, he himself was not made : and his divine power is signified, when it is said, “ all things subsist,” or are preserved by him.

Further : Critics lay down a general rule, whereby to elucidate the sense and meaning of authors, viz. to know the time in which they lived ; the circumstances in which they wrote ; and the adversaries with whom they were engaged. The application of the rule evinces the literality of the first chapter of St. John, which puzzled and perplexed the Arians and Socinians, and exhausted the metaphysics of the subtle Crellius. St. John wrote his gospel at the request of the Asiatic bishops, in opposition to the false doctrine of Ebion and Cerinthus, who denied the Divinity of the Son of God. Motives, circumstances, the nature of the question, the doctrine of his adversaries, all concur to prove that he is to be understood in a literal sense : a sense so free from any mysterious obscurity, that the Platonic philosophers, according to St. Austin, discovered, in this chapter, the Divinity of the Son of God. “ But they were too proud,” says this father, “ to acknowledge the lowness of his humanity.”

SECOND OBSCURITY.

To invalidate our belief of Christ's conception in a virgin's womb, you oppose St. Matthew,

thew, who says, "that Jacob was father to Joseph, the husband of Mary," to St. Luke, who says, "that Heli was Joseph's father." But this seeming contradiction vanishes, if we pay attention to the manner in which the Jews sometimes traced their genealogy. In Deuteronomy*, the law declares, "that if one brother dies without children, the surviving brother shall marry his relict, in order to raise up issue for the deceased," which issue was to bear his name. Hence, a twofold genealogy amongst the Jews; the one legal, the other natural. Jacob and Heli were brothers. Heli died without issue. Jacob married his relict, and begot Joseph, the husband of Mary. Thus, when St. Luke calls Heli "Joseph's father," he means, his father, according to the law: and when St. Matthew calls Jacob "Joseph's father," he means, his father, according to nature: and by this means, the evangelists are easily reconciled. Other solutions are given to this difficulty, and you are at your option to give the preference to which you choose. The Jewish records and their family-registers have been burnt with the archives of their temple. We live at too great a distance to settle the genealogies of their families. The evangelists, besides the gift of inspiration, had every information: as they were nearer the times. In certain countries,

* Chap. xxv.

tries, there are some traces of this ancient custom of giving the denomination of father or uncle to a person who is not either the one or the other, but by a fiction of law. Hence, in the province of Britany, in France, by their municipal law, a relation, in a remoter degree, inherits as an uncle; and has the title of "On-
"cle a la mode de Bretagne," an uncle, according to the custom of Britany.

If, of two historians, in writing the life of one of their nobles, one said, that he was nephew to one, and the other, that he was nephew to another, could we impeach either with ignorance, when both could be reconciled by examining into the customs of the country in which they wrote? And, if the rule stands good with regard to authors of credit and repute, how much more so, with regard to inspired writers?

Let us now examine your difficulty relative to this famous prophecy of Isaiah*, applied to Jesus Christ by St. Matthew †, "A virgin shall
"conceive, and bring forth a Son: and they
"shall call his name Immanuel: that is to say,
"God is with us."

You assert, that "St. Matthew did not well
"understand the prophet's meaning:" and
"that this prophecy concerns one Maher-shalal-
"hahbas,

* Chap. vii. verse 14.

† Chap. i.

“hashbas, born of a prophetess, and given as
“a sign to Ahaz, king of Judah.” An easy
way to elude a text of scripture! Mistakes and
ignorance attributed to inspired writers!

We are to state the fact that gave occasion to
this prophecy, before we attempt to unfold its
mysterious sense, and to shew how the co-inci-
dence of circumstances makes it applicable to
Jesus Christ, and to him alone.

The kings of Israel and Syria laid siege to
Jerusalem, with a design to cut off the house of
David, and place a stranger on the throne.
Ahaz, who could not be ignorant of Jacob’s
prophecy, who had foretold, “that the sceptre
“should not depart from the house of Judah,
“until Shiloh, or the Messiah, was come,”*
apprehended, not only the reduction of the
city, but moreover the total excision of the
Jewish polity, which was to happen when the
sceptre was to depart from the house of David:
as it afterwards came to pass, about the time of
the birth of Christ, when the Jews were obliged
to receive such kings as the Romans chose to
appoint.

To dispel the fears of the desponding king,
the prophet gives him two signs, confirming,
first, that the sceptre should not depart from
the

* Genesis, chap. xxix.

the house of David, until a child is born of a virgin, in a miraculous manner, who would be God himself, *Immanuel*: and; as there was not such a miraculous child in his kingdom, he might rest secure, that the sceptre should not depart so soon from the royal line. Thus, his alarms, concerning the house of David, are quieted, in hearing the prophecy foretelling a miraculous birth, which was to happen at a distant period. There still remained another doubt, viz. whether the confederate kings would take Jerusalem, besieged by such powerful forces? and this the prophet removed, by telling him, that his own child * should not be of age to discern good from evil, before the two kings would be cut off.

Between Immanuel and Maher-shalal-hashbas there is not the least connexion. The first signifies, in Hebrew, "God with us:" the second signifies, "hasten to take the spoils: make haste to take the prey." The one is conceived by a virgin: the other is the fruit of connubial ties: and the prophet expressly declares it †. Upon this occasion, we do not read, that he married a second wife: neither was polygamy familiar to austere persons of the prophetic profession: and the third verse, of the seventh chapter, absolutely precludes

* Mentioned, chap. viii. verse 4.

† In chap. viii. verse 3.

precludes a state of virginity, whereas the prophet is commanded to go with his son to meet the king: and this son must be older than Maher-shalal-hashbas.

The prophecy, then, relates to two different persons,—Immanuel and Maher-shalal-hashbas; two different objects,—the excision of the royal line of David, and the reduction of Jerusalem; two different events and signs,—the raising of the siege, and the defeat of the two confederate kings, which was to be accomplished speedily, before the prophet's child could cry to his father and mother: and the other, I mean the total extinction of the Jewish regal authority, when the sceptre was to be wrested from David's descendants, and lodged in the hands of the Essenian kings, under the protection of the Romans, about the time of Immanuel's birth, “who is
“ God above all, and blessed for ever.”

Should any doubt still remain, concerning this famous prophecy, faith is the firm anchor that ought to fix the doubts of a fluctuating mind: and humility should be so far prevalent, as to induce us to prefer the opinion of an inspired writer before our own. We must renounce the scriptures, or acknowledge that an evangelist is a more competent judge of a prophet's meaning than we can pretend to be.

After

After wading through those difficulties, I shall not swell my page with all the passages quoted in your book, to prove Christ's humanity : I allow them all. But what are we to do with all the texts that prove his Divinity ? " The Alpha " and Omega." " The beginning and end." " My Father and I are one." " The first and " the last." " A God manifested in flesh : a " God mortified in flesh." " God was the " Word." Supreme worship due to God alone : " Let all the angels of God adore him." Eternal generation : " This day I have begotten " thee." The express appellation of a God, and his sovereign dominion : " Unto the Son he " saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and " ever," &c. &c. &c.

To elude the texts that assert his Divinity, you take refuge in a vain distinction of two characters in which Christ appeared,—the one private, the other public : a man, in his private character ; an ambassador or messenger of God, in his public ministry, by shewing his credentials, and assuming the title of God, in quality of an ambassador. I appeal to the judgment of the public, if this be not sporting with words, and perverting the use of language.

In the most solemn negotiations between monarchs, do their ambassadors or envoys arrogate

gate to themselves the title of kings? And in the most authentic ratifications of treaties, do not they sign in their masters names? Has any of them the presumption to pass for the son of his master? When Christ said to his disciples, "As my living Father has sent me, so I send you." When St. Paul said, "We are Christ's ambassadors," did either he or any of the apostles say, "I am Christ,—Christ and I are one. Whatever Christ does, I do in like manner. I am before Abraham. I am before all things?"

When, by way of allusion, the title of God is given to any mortal in the scriptures, the limitations and restrictions, under which it is given, evidently preclude an indisputable claim to such an awful title. It is a gift bestowed with a parsimonious hand. "I have made thee the God of Pharaoh," says the Almighty to Moses. This word, Pharaoh, limits and circumscribes the power of the *deified* mortal, and evinces a precarious title. *I have said ye are Gods*, but the addition of the following words, *ye shall die*, clears up the prophet's meaning. Besides, this appellation is given by some others: no person assumes it himself. Christ declares, that he is the Son of God, the same with his Father. In his person, all the lineaments of the Divinity are united. Prophecies and oracles, predicting "that God himself will come to save us," are applied

applied to him. He declares himself to be the same: and St. Paul affirms, that he thought it no usurpation to be equal to the Most High.

In vain, then, is it alleged, that Christ and his apostles applied these oracles and passages to the Son of God in a figurative manner, or, to use the term of the schools, *in an accommodate sense*.

Lucifer himself, who attempted “to raise his throne above the clouds, and make himself like unto the Most High,” could not have used a more impious and blasphemous figure, than to usurp the name and attributes of the sovereign Being; to require the same homage, adoration, and love, that are due to the Divinity. “He that loves father and mother more than me, is not worthy to be my disciple.” “Whoever loves his life more than me, is not worthy to be my disciple.” Did mortal before ever use such words.

All other figures and allegories are explained in some part of scripture, or wrapped up in mysterious clouds, to be dispelled by the brightness of eternal day, after exercising our belief: but, with regard to the Divinity of Christ, if it be a figure, it is a metaphor continued through a long chain of prophecies and oracles, without the least explication to unfold its mysterious sense,

sense, repeated almost in every page of the New Testament, and sealed with the blood of Christ, his apostles, and martyrs. When he appeared on earth to convert the Jews and Gentiles, and destroy idolatry, which blindfolded mankind, could he have taken more opposite steps to his mission, than to raise the dead, and change the course of nature, in proof of a doctrine insinuating his Divinity, if he had no real claim to the title? At a time when the credulous multitude were apt to enrol extraordinary men in the number of their Gods,—when they worshipped the earth that nourished them,—the air that refreshed them,—the sun that enlightened them,—the moon that directed their steps, in the obscurity of night,—the fire that warmed them,—the heroes that cleared the woods and forests of lions and serpents that annoyed them,—the conquerors who delivered them from their enemies,—the wise and generous princes who rendered their subjects happy, and the memory of their reign immortal—at a time when altars were erected at Athens, to the Unknown God,—when the priests of Salamis raised the sacrificial knife, to offer victims in honour of Paul, whom they took for Mercury, on account of his eloquence, and the novelty of his doctrine,—and in honour of Barnabas whom they revered as Jupiter, on account of his venerable aspect,—and when
the

the fortileges of Simon, the magician, procured him the honour of a temple at Rome, and the appellation of the *Great God*,—at such a critical period, when gratitude deified benefactors, and extraordinary powers laid the foundations of temples, and swelled the catalogue of false gods,—it was a dangerous and ill-timed doctrine, to preach that he was equal to God; that he was the Son of God; that eternal life consisted in the knowledge of himself and of his Father; to command his followers to lay down their lives sooner than deny him, &c. and to confirm this doctrine by silencing the winds that subsided at his nod; by calming the stormy seas—changing the nature of the elements; restoring sight to the blind,—the use of their limbs to the lame; forcing Death to surrender his spoils,—and all nature to acknowledge his power and empire. Shall a Paul and Barnabas tear their garments in being taken for something more than mortal men; and shall Jesus Christ, if he be not God, in a calm deliberate manner, rob the Creator of all things, of his glory and the worship due to him, in affirming that himself and the God of Heaven are *one*,—in applauding the faith of the apostle who said that he was *the Son of the living God*,—and in not checking the disciple who, after thrusting his hand into his side, exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!”

It

It is not only in the time of his liberty, when he visits the cities of Israel, healing their sick, raising their dead, feeding multitudes with a few loaves, and refusing the temporal sovereignty which the people offered him, that he attributes to himself the prerogatives of the Divinity. It is in chains, in the course of his trial, and on the cross. Conjured by the high priest to tell whether he is Christ the Son of God, he answers in the affirmative: and, in proof of his assertion, says that they shall see him on the right hand of God. "Do you hear the blasphemy?" cries out the other. Had he used any mental reservations on this occasion, by saying one thing and meaning another,—by expressing outwardly, "I am the Son of God," and restraining in his mind the sense of the words, to the quality of a messenger,—he would not have answered according to the pontiff's meaning, who knew but too well the difference between a messenger, such as any prophet may be, and a Son, who must be of the same nature with his Father. What a precedent for perjurers! And what blasphemy in St. Paul, who affirms, "that he thought it no usurpation to "make himself equal unto God!"

Common sense often supplies the room of metaphysical demonstrations. And common sense will inform you, that Jesus Christ is either the greatest impostor that ever appeared, or that
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he is literally what he declared himself to be, *God and Man*, for whom the martyrs suffered, whom the Christians adore, and to whom all knees are to bend one day.

If he is an impostor, in vain has the blood of impure victims been drained ; in vain have the altars of false deities been overturned ; in vain have their idols been crushed, and their temples destroyed ; a new idol has been set up in their room, and the worship due to the Sovereign Being has been transferred to an impostor. If this be the case, God, then, must have deceived mortals, in investing an impostor, during his life, and his disciples, after his death, with such extraordinary powers : And the miracles wrought in confirmation of their doctrine, and which could never be wrought but by his express and immediate power, must have been wrought with an express design to mislead his creatures into delusion and error. Reconcile this, if you can, to his goodness, wisdom, and providence ; and behold the absurdities to which incredulity leads.

If you intend to reconcile those texts that attribute to the same person, an eternal generation and birth in time,—transcendent glory and profound humility,—the power and majesty of a God, with the sufferings and death of a man,—admit in the same person, the Divine and human.

human nature.—Then, all seeming contradictions vanish. His infirmities and sufferings are applicable to him, as Man ; whilst his glorious characters and titles are to be attributed to his Godhead, disguised under a human veil. Thus, in Jesus Christ we find the God that created us, whereas he is the same with his Father ; the Redeemer who purchased us, by paying our ransom ; the spotless Pontiff, through whom we find access to the throne of mercy. His cross is folly to the Jew, and a scandal to the Gentile : but to the Christian it is the power and wisdom of God. For if he was not man, he could not suffer ; and if he were not God, his sufferings would not avail us. He becomes man, to suffer for our sake : and, as God, he gives his sufferings an infinite price.

I remain, &c.

E

LETTE

L E T T E R IV.

S I R,

I N the preceding letters, we have touched upon the weakness^{of reason}, and the necessity of revealed religion; the obscurity in which mortals were involved, and the incongruity of denying religious mysteries, when the book of nature, open to our eyes, is scarce legible; our fall in Adam, and our restoration in Christ.

It is now time to examine your opinion concerning the soul of man: an opinion which you deliver in the seventy-second page of your work, in these words: "Hence, I conclude that the soul dies with the body. It is an opinion conformable to reason, observation, and to the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ and his apostles." Whatever arguments you might have drawn from *observation*, you should have passed over the authority of Christ and his apostles: an authority never adduced before in support of a doctrine which in every page they condemn. Or at least, you should have first a Bible of your own, and forced it on the world, as handed to you by the angel Gabriel.

Man

Man must certainly be liable to error, when in the blaze of revelation, and after the progress philosophy has made in the world, he still cries out, with the disciple of Epicurus :

“ We know not yet how our soul’s produc’d,
 “ Whether by body born, or else infus’d :
 “ Whether in death, breath’d out into the air,
 “ She doth confus’dly mix and perish there,
 “ Or through vast shades and horrid silence go
 “ To visit brimstone caves and pools below.”*

Your observation must be quite different from the *observations* of the greatest men the faculty of physic ever produced : men who were, and are still, as great ornaments to the literary world, as they are useful to mankind.

We *observe*, sir, within ourselves, a principle that is obeyed as a sovereign ; that now finds fault with what it before approved ; that covets with passion what it despises after enjoying ; that now rejoices and then mourns ; that reasons and judges. I consult my *reason* : and it informs me, that this principle, so noble, and, at the same time, so liable to such conflicting agitations, cannot be a particle of matter, round or square, red or blue ; a volatilized vapour dissolvable into air ; a contexture of atoms interwoven or separated by a sportive brain.

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My

* Creech’s Lucretius, Book 1.

My *reason* informs me, that a being, capable to take in hands the government of a vast empire,—to form projects, the success whereof depends on an infinity of different springs, whose motions and accords must be studied and combined,—is something more than a little subtilized mud.

I observe matter with all its mutations and refinements: and I perceive nothing but extension, divisibility, figure, and motion.

My reason tells me, that the combinations of the different particles of matter, let their velocity be ever so great, can never reveal the sacred mysteries of faith,—the holy rules of equity,—the ideas of piety, order, and justice.

Moreover, reason informs us, that matter is indifferent to motion or rest, to this or that situation. When moved in any direction, the smallest particle of any body or mass of matter, must yield to the motion of the whole. On the other hand, in our temptations and struggles, amidst the sollicitations of sense, and the cravings of appetite, we can say, with St. Paul, that we feel an interior conflict and two opposite laws in ourselves: “the law of the body warring
“against the law of the mind, and attempting
“to captivate us to the law of sin.” Under the inconvenience of such struggles and conflicts, a
part

part of ourselves still remains the directing principle, always asserting its rights, and constantly supporting its native title to dominion.

Reconcile, if you can, to the laws of mechanism,—to the cohesion of atoms,—and to the motions of particles of matter,—the infinite capacity of the soul, its strong desires after immortality,—its power to infer conclusions from principles, in mathematical demonstrations and logical arguments,—its arbitrary and voluntary determinations,—this shifting and changing,—those strange and sudden returns, reflections, and transitions in thought, which, by experience, we find it in our power to make.

We all agree, that matter touches in contact, and that whatever moves, is put in motion by another. We know, on the other hand, that, in reasoning, argumentations, demonstrations, &c. wherein we infer one thing from another, and another thing from that inference, and a third from thence, and so on, there is an infinity of different modes of thought. If those different modes of thought be no more than the different states of the solid, figured, divisible parts of matter, with respect to velocity and direction, it is necessary that they should have been put into these different states, by the impulse of some foreign mover.

If this mover, which is the cause of motion, be matter, it must be moved or acted on itself: for otherwise it could not produce a change of motion in other contiguous parts of matter. There must still be a mover prior to the former, and another prior to that, and so on to infinity, in every act of reason and argumentation. But a progression to infinity is discarded by all philosophers, both ancient and modern.

To spin out the subject in metaphysical arguments, were loss of time. Suffice it to say, that we would contradict our *reason*, and belye our hearts, in supposing that the troubles, agitations, importunate remorse, we feel after the commission of some horrid crime,—the secret reproaches of a guilty conscience, which made the Athenian paricide cry out, twenty years after having murdered his father, that the crows upbraided him with his death:—we would, I say, only belye our hearts, in supposing such interior punishments, which tread in the heels of guilt, to be no more than an assemblage of little atoms, with hooked or rough surfaces. In supposing that patience and resignation in our afflictions, from an expectation of immortality and the spiritual joys of future bliss, the distant reward of our trials, are the result of smooth atoms gliding through the brain; or that the horrors, which haunt the guilty, proceed from the same cause

cause which produces a pain in the head, back, or stomach.

Further : Under the dispensation of a just and powerful God, crimes must be punished, and virtue rewarded. What notion can we form of a God, who makes no distinction between the wretch who strangles his father, in order to take possession of his estate, and the just man who is disposed to prefer death to iniquity, from an apprehension of offending his Maker ?

Yet the world has seen the greatest sinners elated with prosperity,—arrayed with crimes, as with a raiment of glory,—swimming in an ocean of pleasures, which the fountains of extortion and injustice supply,—strangers to those miseries which, in this world, seem to be the inheritance of the righteous. How many illustrious culprits, whose power and credit silence the authority of the laws, whilst the innocent victim is suspended on the tree, upon the deposition of a perjurer, or from the corruption of a judge ! The world has seen a Herod on the throne, after murdering the innocents,—and a John the Baptist beheaded, in prison, for exclaiming against incest,—a Nero swaying the sceptre of the world, after ripping open his mother's womb,—and a Paul bound with chains, for preaching justice, judgment, and chastity.

Virtue,

Virtue, then, being oppressed in this life, and vice unpunished,—the silence of a Just and All-powerful God,—points out a future state, where justice is to resume its rights, and reward each according to his works. And, if divine justice points out a future state, the soul must survive the body.

But you inform us that you believe in a future state, though the soul is nothing but a motion of the cerebrum, which perishes along with it : For, says the Doctor, “ God will change our bodies “ into spirits at the last day, when the world “ will perish for want of vegetable food, on account of the mould of the earth being washed “ away into the sea ; so that nothing will remain but the bare rocks ;” still, he will not admit that the body will rise ; but that God will create a spirit in the room of every body that ever appeared. This extraordinary creed runs through the whole course of his work ; and even in his defence he does not retract it.

It is, certainly, the fittest time to *change* our mouths and stomachs into spirits; when we will have nothing to eat : for, after the resurrection; the hillocks will no longer smile with the beauty of the vine ; the fields will no longer curl with ears of corn. Our bodies then are useless.

Besides :

Besides: In this *religious chemistry*, we meet with an ample compensation: for, as we are nothing but bodies now, we will be all spirits hereafter: and the gentleman, who grants us neither soul here, nor body hereafter, grants us both by turns,—bodies, when we have enough to eat,—spirits when we have no food. Pray, sir, between spirit and matter, is not there an infinite distance? Are not their properties so distinct, as mutually to exclude each other? God, then, must destroy the nature of the one, before he can change it into the other. A new creation must ensue: and one being must be substituted in the room of another. A spirit, then, thus created, and coming from the hands of God, *whose works are pure*, is it to suffer for the crimes of a Nero or a Caligula, committed thousands of years before its existence? If those monsters of human nature, whose names stand for the most odious crimes, are to be punished in a future state, is any part of the body, in which they committed the most abominable actions, to be joined to this pretended spirit? If so, spirit and body can be united together. If no part of the body is to be joined to this spirit, then it is a spirit immediately created by the Almighty, and immediately punished, without any previous sin of its own. Reconcile this, if you can, to the justice of God, who rewards or punishes every one according to his works.

Let

Let you and I enjoy ourselves, and be careless about what is to happen hereafter : for God will create some *spirit*, who will be chastised hereafter for the faults we now commit. To your resurrection, then, may be applied what Tully said of the creed of some philosophers of his time : “ *Verbis ponunt, re tollunt Deos.*” You acknowledge it in words : you deny it in reality.

But the gentleman returns to the charge, and attacks the spirituality of the soul on three grounds : first, because matter cannot be put in motion by a spirit : secondly, the soul follows the disposition of the body ; whereas, in sleep, drunkenness, palsy, infancy, &c. it has not the exercise or use of reason : thirdly, he has recourse to the infinite power of God, who can add thought to matter ; and summons to his assistance, the brute creation, to which he attributes a soul of the same identical nature with the soul of man ; though perhaps in an inferior degree of perfection ; and concludes, that, as the soul of man and the soul of the brute are of the same nature, they both perish alike. He is so confident of the truth of this doctrine, that he affirms “ Solomon and sir Isaac Newton “ to be no more than the production of what “ their fathers eat ;” and deploras our blindness for having been deceived by the schoolmen,

men, whose cunning has first introduced this notion of immortality.

We shall not dwell long upon the nature of Solomon and sir Isaac's souls, which, certainly, must have been made of the most refined and *sublimated* particles of matter. Old Scriblerus seems to have entertained the same opinion with the doctor * : for he would not permit his child Martinus's nurse to eat any roast beef or heavy aliments, lest his son should become too *heavy and dull*. Hence, his choice of Attic and Roman dishes, in order that their juices should impregnate his son with the valour and elegance of the ancients.

The doctor would oblige us, if he informed the public, of the quality and quantity of food used by king David. We would soon have numbers of Solomons. Manifold would be the advantages accruing to society, from such a discovery. Instead of losing most of our time in colleges, the outlines of the plan of education suitable to the clergyman, the statesman, the lawyer, could be sketched in the kitchen, and completed at table. The *beau* and *belle* should feed on butterflies. Calves-feet jellies would qualify the courtier and petit maitre for making a flexible and graceful bow. I believe that the
harshness

* See Martinus Scriblerus. Chapter of nutrition.

harshness and acrimony of religious disputes, controversial writings, and anniversary sermons, proceed from the great quantity of black pudding and mustard, which our polemical divines eat at their breakfasts. And if we knew the spoon-meat, with which the doctor was fed, we would know the olio requisite to make a philosopher who unravels the secrets of nature and religion.

But (to return to the objections), you say, "that matter cannot be put in motion by a spirit." Who is it that established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the Heavens by his understanding? A Spirit. Who hanged the earth upon nothing, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? A Spirit. Who cloathed the face of the earth with flowers, and placed the sand for the bounds of the sea? A Spirit.

Matter, then, and the whole frame of nature, were put in motion by a spiritual agent; otherwise, they would never exist: for they could never have created themselves. The same agent can unite a spiritual soul to a material substance, in order to impel, actuate, move, and diffuse a vital influence through the dormant and unwieldy mass.

"But

“But does not the soul follow the dispositions of the body?” Most certainly. It is ignorant in children; ripens into maturity and judgment, in proportion to our advances to perfection; is in its full vigour, when we attain to our perfect growth; declines with age; and sinks into a sluggish torpor, when the body is encumbered with years, and worn with longevity. In an apoplexy, palsy, drunkenness, sleep, &c. its powers are suspended.

Such is the general rule: yet to this general rule there are many and extraordinary exceptions: people, encumbered with years, reasoning, at the hour of their dissolution, in the most sublime and pathetic strain: the soul's vigour increasing in proportion as the body decayed: as the prisoner feels himself more light and active in proportion as his chains are taking off: children at the age of seven, demonstrating Euclid's propositions without the help of a master, and with feeble constitutions composing books, and bearing away the palm of erudition, before they attained to the age of eleven.

In sleep itself, when the senses are locked, and the body is consigned over, as it were, to the arms of death, in what active scenes doth not the soul appear? The student, who, when awake, could not leap two yards, nor compose his theme, is seen, in a profound sleep, fly, like
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one of the feathered tribe, out at his window; climb, without assistance of rope or ladder, to the roof of a towering building; arrange, by the light of the moon, his figures of rhetoric; go through all the rules of amplification; descend with the same ease that he went up; lay his piece of eloquence on his desk. In the morning, he knows his hand-writing; but cannot believe himself the author of such an elaborate composition.

But, however difficult it may appear, that a spiritual and active substance should be obstructed in its operations, the difficulty vanishes, when we reflect, that the closest connexion subsists between soul and body; and that the Creator of all things has ordained their acting in concert, during our short pilgrimage here on earth.

Ignorance in children, and stupidity in old people, arise from the insertion of an active and spiritual substance, in matter not fitly disposed, and yet ordained to be its organ and instrument. The brain is too moist in children, and too dry in old people: consequently, unapt either for the reception or retention of the images transmitted from exterior objects: which images or representations are the materials for the soul to work on. The pencil cannot delineate well, if the canvas be unfit.

Letters

Letters cannot be formed with nice and delicate strokes, if the pen be bad. It is neither the painter's nor writer's fault, if their skill does not shine in their respective performances. The defect originates in the unaptness of the materials. It is the same case with the soul. This spiritual and immortal substance, seated in the head, as a pilot at the helm, who, besides his innate skill, wants the assistance of the sails and rudder to steer the unwieldy vessel,—or as a monarch in his palace, who has none but sickly and disordered subjects to command,—the soul, I say, stands in need of the organs of the body, as so many ministers of sensation, towards the exertion of its faculties.

If I am confined to a chamber that has but one window, I cannot see through more than one. If there be more, I can see through all. The visual faculty, in both cases, is the same: and the difference consists in the removal of the obstacles. Thus, on the loss of an eye or limb, the soul is neither blind nor lame: it is still the same, though its instrumentality be partly destroyed. But if the brain, whose inexplicable folds and spacious palaces are the repositories of the various images coming in through their respective avenues from exterior objects, be disordered and obstructed by drunkenness, apoplexy, &c. the passages become impracticable;

ble; the canvas becomes wrinkled and uneven; the glowing colours cannot spread; the size and attitude of the figures are confounded; and all the requisites of reasoning are wanting. Let the drunken man sleep, and the sick man recover, then the obstacles are removed; and reason will inform you, that the soul is still the same.

If the soul, then, under the inconvenience of the foregoing circumstances of drunkenness, fever, &c. still retains a faculty or power of perceiving, reasoning, and judging, to be exerted when these obstacles are removed,—how much more capable will it not be of those spiritual functions, after its separation from the mass of clay, when, disentangled from its fetters, with its enlargement from the body, “it will return
“to the God who gave it!”

But you inform us, that “God can do any
“thing that does not imply a contradiction:”
and that, “by an infinite power, he can add
“thought to matter.”

“But,” sir, “must not a man be very sanguine” in the cause of scepticism, and eager to work himself into incredulity, when he has recourse to infinite power, sooner than admit a spiritual soul? If God can add thought to matter, why deny, in a peremptory manner,
the

the possibility of uniting spirit to body? Locke acknowledges the possibility of adding thought to matter, by the intervention of infinite power, to the great comfort of our modern free-thinkers; but still he acknowledges his soul to be spiritual and immortal.

No unhappy comfort can then arise to those whose greatest joy would consist in being a lump of animated earth, from Locke's opinion: for God can do several things which he will never perform. He never will animate a stone, or tree; and cover them with flesh, susceptible of passions, and willing to gratify them; give them the organs of speech; and thus introduce on the stage of life, a set of dogmatizing philosophers, who will glory in being the brothers of plants and mushrooms: as Bias, the philosopher, said of the Athenians, who gloried in being originally sprung from the earth.

Sound logic does not allow to argue from possibility to fact: and, though every respect is due to Locke's authority, yet his possibility of *thinking matter*, and others of his hypotheses, are objected to, by the learned. Nor has he any room to complain, if the world does not pay him the same implicit obedience which the disciples of Pythagoras paid their master: for several great mathematicians and metaphysicians consider, as

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very

very possible, systems which Locke rejects, as contradictions.

We cannot account for the operations of the soul, upon the principles of mechanism. We know that the motions of parts, and the artful manner of combining them, can produce nothing but an artful structure, and various modes of motion. Hence, all machines, however artfully their parts are put together, and however complicated their structure, though we conceive innumerable different motions variously combined, and running into one another, with an endless variety, yet never produce any thing but figure and motion. Much less can we account for our mental operations, from the properties of matter. Lucretius and his followers may employ their plastic powers in forming a soul composed of particles of air, fire, vapour, and a fourth *something* which that poet does not describe.

They will acknowledge, that none of those elementary particles, separate from the rest, can think ; but that, from their mixture and collision, thought results which they attempt to prove by the example of the tree and the earth, neither of which produces fruit in a separate state. But it is obvious, that the tree contains in itself the seed of the fruit, which the earth sirs and deve-

developes: and, to give justness to the comparison, by the same rule, either the fire or air should contain in itself the origin of thought; which is an absurdity.

If you admit that God can superadd thought to matter, this thought, then, must be a quality superior to matter, and, consequently, distinct from it. Then the contradiction is palpable: for it will follow, that it is matter and not matter at the same time.

As to the brutes, become of late the subjects of philosophical panegyric, that raises them to an equality with man, we like them for the service or diversion they afford us: but, *less virtuous than our philosophers*, we have not humility to wish to be on a level with them. Pity our pride and ignorance, great oracles, who revile the Christians, and extol the cunning of the fox, the imitative powers of the ape, the architecture of the beaver, and the provident foresight of the ant!

Since you believe them of the same nature with yourselves, why do not you arraign the cruelty of the magistrates, under whose eyes so many murders are daily committed on your brethren? For if man and the brute be of the same nature, why should beasts be killed with impunity, whilst the assassin is doomed to the

gibbet? The question may seem childish: yet your refined philosophy is humbly requested to give a solid answer. Your catechism can illustrate the subject.

T H E

FREE-THINKER'S CATECHISM:

FAITHFULLY COLLECTED FROM SOME OF THE

MOST CELEBRATED FREE-THINKERS
OF THIS AGE.

Question. Who made man?

Answer. Nothing.

Q. How did he come into the world?

A. He sprung out of the earth, spontaneously; as a mushroom*.

Q. The souls of men and brutes, are they of the same nature?

A. Yes†.

Q. What difference, then, is there between man and the brute?

A. Man is a more multiplied animal, with hands and flexible fingers. The paws and feet
of

* Voltaire on the population of America.

† Servetus of Cork.

of other animals are covered, at the extremities, with a horny substance; or terminate in claws and talons*.

Q. Our superiority over the brute creation, in arts, sciences, modesty, civilization, is, then, owing to our hands and fingers, not to any innate principle of reason?

A. Doubtless.

Q. But the apes, whose paws are much like ours, why have not they made the same progress?

A. Apes live on fruits: and being, like children, in perpetual motion, they are not susceptible of that *ennui*, or wearisomeness, to which we are liable †.

Q. Is there any virtue in worshipping God, in loving our father, in serving our country, in relieving the distressed?

A. No.

Q. In what light, then, are we to consider virtue?

A. Cry out, with Brutus: "O vertu, tu n'es
" qu'un

* Helvetius, livre de l'Esprit, p. 233. † Ibid. p. 3.

"qu'un vain nom !" O virtue, thou art but an empty sound!*



Lo, the refined system introduced by those great oracles of human wisdom. If the cannibals, who eat their aged parents, ever learn to read, they will find their justification in your catechism.

Our philosophers are the great panegyrist of the instinct of animals, whilst they degrade the reason of man. The reason is obvious. In pointing out the brutes as rivals qualified to contend for superiority with us, they can argue with ease and satisfaction. "All dies with the brutes : all dies with man. Let us, then, live as they do : for our end will be the same." But still this way of reasoning, how flattering soever to sensuality, cannot remove the perplexing doubt : for if the brute's soul be of the same nature with that of man, then there is no certainty that the soul of the brute dies. For, laying aside religion, which has decided the question, "fear not those who can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," there is no demonstration that the soul of man dies, but every thing demonstrates the reverse. To argue, then, with any colour of reason, from the brute to the man, you must have a thorough conviction of two things : first, that the soul of the brute is of the

* Helvetius, p. 397.

the same nature with the soul of man : secondly, that the soul of man dies. Neither can be demonstrated ; and, consequently, the assistance, which our *two-footed* philosophers expect from this league and confederacy, into which they would fain enter with apes and *fourfooted* animals, for the destruction of our souls, is no more than a broken reed.

But you will ask me, “ In what this instinct “ of the brutes, and the nature of their souls consists ? ” I answer candidly, that I know not. Some philosophers are of opinion, that the brutes are mere machines, moved by some exterior agent. Others allow them an inherent principle of life and industry. To the opinion of the latter I accede ; and believe, that what we call *instinct*, is a certain sagacity and inclination given them by the Creator for their preservation and our use. But you, who know the nature of your own soul, which you affirm to be of the same nature with that of apes and foxes, can resolve the question.

Buffon, the French academician, acknowledges, that in the dissection of some apes, he could not discover any difference between their organs and those of the human species : yet the same Buffon, in spite of the similarity of organs, admits, that the distance between
man

man and the ape is infinite, on account of thought, reason, and consciousness, which proceed from a spiritual principle: and the royal psalmist recommends to us, not to “resemble the horse and the mule that have no understanding.” Our ignorance of the nature of their *instincts*, *souls*, &c. does not imply an ignorance of the nature of our own. If, through the veil of a mortal body, we can know and love our Maker, why should we cease to know him, when the mask falls, and the veil is removed? If we admit no annihilation in nature,—and that matter, in spite of its changes, never perishes,—why should we refuse the soul the same privilege? If brutes could reason, judge, abstract, divide, compare the rules of order, justice, good and evil, as rational beings do, they would not answer the end of nature; and what has been made for the use of man, would become his destruction.

By dint of blows and other means, we can train up a horse to point out the hour on a dial; a bear to dance; a monkey to supply the place of a postillion; a dog to move a minuet. Several instances of the sagacity of animals are adduced by Plutarch and others. But, whatever variety of turns and motions they may acquire by such a culture, it is not to principle of reason, but to the address of their tutors, we are
to

to attribute it: for, however quick their hearing,—how sagacious soever their instinct,—it would be vain to attempt instructing them in the beauty of order,—the rules of justice,—the rights of society,—the origin of the world,—the love of their Maker,—the terrors of the last judgment,—the pains of hell,—the ineffable joys of a future state. Whoever doubts me, let him try the experiment.

It is not so with the savage or child. They are capable of instruction in all those points; and susceptible of the impressions arising from the notions of moral good or moral evil.

Hence, neither from the sagacity of brutes,—nor the experience of mankind,—nor the *observations of philosophers*,—can arguments be adduced in support of a doctrine tending to overthrow the spirituality and immortality of the soul. And, when you attribute the doctrine of the soul's immortality to the subtilty of schoolmen,—and when Helvetius fixes its first introduction in Nero's time, when the gospel was preached at Rome*,—we cannot arraign either you or him for ignorance, as both are well read: but we charge you with wilful imposition, which is worse.

Scattered sparks of the soul's immortality are to be found in the old Testament. Resurrec-
tion,

* Helvetius, livre de l'Esprit.

tion, judgment, the rewards and punishments of a future life, are mentioned by the inspired writers, long before the introduction of the gospel, or Hesiod's theogony. Pythagoras taught the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, long before Seneca taught Nero to declaim. Even ancient errors shew how ancient was the belief of the soul's immortality; and demonstrate, that it is to be ranked amongst the first traditions of mankind. Did not almost all men sacrifice to the *manes*, that is, to the souls, of the dead? From one extremity of the world to the other, people of different humours, countries, worship, interest, agree in this important article of immortality. It is no collusion: for a general association of mankind could never be formed. Nor a prejudice of education: for manners, customs, and education, are different, in different nations. This notion of immortality is common to all. Remote isles and foreign nations figured to themselves, shades and climates, through which the roving spirit was to travel, after its separation from the body. Hence, the custom of killing wives and officers, at the death of their kings; lest the royal ghost should travel without attendants. This several nations practiced: and the Indians, distinguished by pagan authors, amongst the first assertors of the immortality of the soul, were also the first that introduced those horrid murders upon earth,

earth, which they practise to this very day. Nature, then, taught the soul's immortality, without a monitor : or rather, the Almighty has stamped its notion on our existence : and savage people, in forgetting God, could not forget themselves.

There are still some religious, as well as philosophical paradoxes in your writings, besides the capital errors already mentioned. I have not leisure to examine them all.

You say, that, from the continual waste of "mould, washed away by the rain, the animal world will become extinct, for want of vegetable food." This, I suppose, is advanced with a design to invalidate the oracles which foretel the world's dissolution by fire. A prodigious quantity of the liquid element is wasted in watering fields, woods, &c. Doctor Halley is of opinion, that the Mediterranean loses in vapour, five thousand five hundred and eighty millions of tons, in a day ; and receives but one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, from rivers : so that it would soon be drained, unless a great quantity returned in dew and rain upon it.

It seems, then, to me, that *the animal world will be extinct, for want of drink*. But a greater prophet than either of us, foretold the world's dissolution by fervent heat.

Y^OU

You argue against the *Chinese antiquities*, from the *waste of mould*. By the same rule, you can argue against Moses' account of the creation. But, to argue against the antiquities of any nation, from the *waste of mould*, is nothing better than *waste of time*. The European missionaries convinced the Chinese of their error, by reckoning the eclipses of the sun, in a conference with their learned men, when the emperor of Tartary became master of China. It was the surest method, and that by which Callisthenes baffled the pretended antiquity of the Babylonians, when Alexander took their city.

If Moses be an allegorical writer, it is hard, "from the waste of mould," to determine when the Alps emerged from the chaos.

You are of opinion, that, before the deluge, "none but giants inhabited the earth." Before the deluge, the world had its *Davids* and *Goliaths* , its *Fionnmacools* and *Ushions* . Moses talks of giants, as rarities: "In them days, there were giants on the earth." A rarity is an exception to the general rule, and supposes a more extensive class of beings.

The longevity of the antediluvians can be ascribed to two causes: the one supernatural,—in order to perpetuate religion, and give the aged patriarchs time to instil it into the minds
of

of their spreading generations: the other natural, viz. their sobriety, the simplicity of their diet, the salubrity of the air, not corrupted by the noxious vapours which rose from the earth, after the flood, the fertility of the soil, &c. You know the state of the world, before the deluge, so well, that you fix "the age of puberty at the age of sixty-five." I believe that procreation began, before the deluge, as early as at present. Or else, they must have been monstrous babes that were at the breast, and fed with spoon-meat, at the age of twenty. By the rules of analogy, we may judge of their nubile state, by the tall Prussian, and low Laplander. The size is disproportionate: but the age for marrying is the same in both.

You deny any confusion of tongues at the dispersion: because what has been translated *language*, signifies *lip*, in Hebrew. Sometimes it does: but the addition of *speech* signifies something more. "And the whole earth was "of one language, and of one speech."* And what is here translated *speech*, signifies *words*, in the original Hebrew.

You deny that there were any *propitiatory sacrifices*. There are sin-offerings, notwithstanding, mentioned in the scriptures: "For the "bodies of those beasts, whose blood for sin is
" brought

* Genesis, chap. ii.

“brought into the sanctuary, by the high priest, are burnt without the camp.” In proof of your opinion, you mention “Pythagoras’s hecatomb for being able to prove the properties of a right-angled triangle: Jephthah’s offering up his daughter: Baal’s priests cutting themselves with knives,” to propitiate their god: and, to crown all, you assert, that the God of Israel changed sides, when the king of Moab sacrificed his son on the walls of his city*.

But, sir, were not sacrifices instituted by the Almighty God? Why should his holy rites and ceremonies be set on a level with heathen profanations, Baal’s priests, and Pythagoras’s idols? A sacrifice is the oblation of a sensible thing, by a lawful minister, in honour of the Divinity, in acknowledgment of his supreme power over life and death. Not only human victims were interdicted by the law, but even several animals; such as asses, hares, &c. Hence, Jephthah’s sacrifice, if he killed his daughter, was a cruel murder: he was no fit priest: his daughter was no fit victim: and God cannot be honoured by a breach of his own law.

I say, “*If* he killed his daughter:” because, in the original Hebrew, it may as well signify, “devoted to the Lord:” meaning that he devoted

* 2 Kings, chap. iii.

voted her to perpetual chastity : as several modern critics explain it, and as it seems to be the case. For, inspired as he was, it is not to be presumed that he was guilty of such a fatal mistake : and St. Paul reckons him amongst the worthies, who, by faith, obtained the promised reward.

How, then, could the God of Israel “ change sides,” by relishing the profane vapours of idolatrous blood, smoking, not in his honour, but in honour of the idols of the Moabites ? The text you quote, “ And there was great indignation against Israel,” proves no more, than that the confederate kings were angry with themselves for having forced the unhappy father to plunge, as it were, the dagger in his own bowels, in the person of his son.

When, to deny propitiatory sacrifices, you say, that “ God cannot be bribed or flattered,” I agree with you. But, sure, you would not controul his power, nor contest his authority, to impose laws and obligations on his creatures ; to annex to the observance and infraction of those laws, rewards and punishments ; to require their submission by visible symbols ; in the victim stretched and bound on the altar, to remind them of the chains of sin, and of their state under their Creator’s hand, who, each instant,

stant, can deprive them of their lives; in the sable smoak rolling from the blazing holocaust, to make them perceive a ray of hope, directing their eyes to a distant victim, the effusion of whose blood was to quench, one day, more active flames, and to change this scene of carnage and misery, into means of expiation; not indeed by the virtue and efficacy of the sacrifices in themselves, but inasmuch as they typified the immolation of "the Lamb that is slain" "from the foundations of the world," in the observance of whose law, and in the love and knowledge of whose person, consists eternal life. Age, a variety of accidents, and the uncertainty of death, press our return to a merciful Redeemer. It is too late to dispute with Jesus Christ his Divinity,—or with the soul its immortality,—when the spirit is arraigned at the awful tribunal of the Judge of the living and the dead.

I have the honour to be

Your affectionate servant,

ARTHUR O'LEARY.

LOYALTY ASSERTED:

OR, THE NEW

TEST OATH VINDICATED,

And proved by the PRINCIPLES of the
CANON AND CIVIL LAWS,

And the AUTHORITY of the

MOST EMINENT WRITERS.

With an ENQUIRY into the
POPE'S DESPOSING POWER,

AND THE

GROUNDLESS CLAIMS OF THE STUARTS.

In a Letter to a Protestant Gentleman.

" Duo sunt, Imperator Auguste, auctoritas sacra
" Pontificum, et regalis potestas."

Gelasius, in epist. ad Anastasium.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY JOHN BURNET

LOYALTY ASSERTED:

OR THE NEW

TEST OATH VINDICATED.

S I R,

NOTWITHSTANDING news-paper declamations, and the heavy charges brought against Popery, you are candid enough to tell me, that "you do not look on my profession as "an imputation so dangerous that it entirely "destroys all correspondence." You are not mistaken in your conjectures. However we may differ in belief, you have nothing to apprehend; as speculative tenets do not interfere with the duties of civil life, and that my practical doctrine tends more to improve, than corrupt the heart.

We have been school-fellows, and well united.
We have met in foreign kingdoms, and the

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remem-

remembrance of an early acquaintance has cemented our friendship anew. We are restored once more to our native isle, floating in an ocean of politics, and exhibiting as great a variety of religions, opinions, and sentiments, as you have seen curiosities at the fair of St. Ovid's in Paris.

What party shall we side? What plan shall we pursue? If we treat as enemies all those whose persuasion is different from ours, the number of our friends will be but small. Let us then be retainers to dean Swift's doctrine. Let the Christians agree in the points allowed on all sides, as much as they differ with regard to private opinions, and dissensions shall be soon at an end. They all agree, that the first of their laws, is a law of eternal love, expanding into sentiments of benevolence, and teaching its votaries to return affection for hatred, and good for evil; that it is a divine legacy bequeathed by their common Redeemer to his followers; and that Christians, cemented together by the blood of a God, should be never divided.

This is a point of doctrine liable to no controversy. Oh! could it be enforced on the mind! factions would soon expire, and Charity ascend the throne, holding broils, dissensions, flanders,

slanders, calumnies at her feet, as so many captives in chains.

‘ Toleration in a popish priest !’ If by toleration is meant indifference as to religion, God forbid ! In this sense it implies an error ; and though it makes a great figure in the disputes among divines, yet in two words we can ascertain its degrees and measures. *Let us never tolerate error in ourselves : let us pity it in our neighbours.* “ Detest the error,” says St. Augustin, “ but love the man.” For in the conflict of different opinions that will divide the world to the end of time, Christian Charity still asserts her prerogatives. Her oily balsam heals the rankling ulcer caused by a *religious inflammation*, and attenuates the black and viscous humours which so often degenerate into an *evangelical spleen*.

But, if by toleration we mean impunity, safety, and protection granted by the state, to every sect that does not maintain doctrines inconsistent with the public peace, the rights of sovereigns, and the safety of our neighbour, to such a toleration I give my patronacy ; and expect that the following proofs of the articles of the test, will evince the justness of entitling the Roman Catholics to the lenity of government, and the confidence of their fellow-subjects.

THE

THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

A R T. I.

“ I, A. B. do take Almighty God to witness,
“ that I will be faithful and bear true allegi-
“ ance to our most gracious Sovereign Lord,
“ King George the Third, and him will de-
“ fend to the utmost of my power, against
“ all conspiracies and attempts, whatever,
“ that shall be made against his person, crown
“ and dignity.”

Although I should never swear any allegiance in form, yet there is an original and natural allegiance from subject to king; a debt that forbids all conspiracies and treasonable practices ‘ against his person, crown and dignity.’ At my birth I was under his protection; and in a tender infancy, when I could not protect myself, I was shielded by his name. His tribunals are still open to secure my life and liberty; and as there is an implied contract between king and subject, my oath does not change the nature of my obligations. It only strengthens the civil band by the tie of religion, and superadds to treason the guilt of perjury in the transgressors.

This

This obligation is corroborated by the positive injunctions of the scripture, enforcing obedience to the prince whose image is stamped on his coin, and grounded on the laws of the nation, which, from the earliest periods, have transferred the subject's allegiance to the king, for the time being, and declared it high treason in a subject to attempt any thing even against an usurper, while he is in full possession of the sovereignty. This the laws have wisely ordained, in order to prevent anarchy and confusion; because the common people cannot judge of the king's title. But here I thrust my sickle into the civilian's field, though in the end, oaths of allegiance should be determined by the laws and maxims of the realm, as well as by principles of divinity*. Further, let it be remarked, that the foundation of this decision has been laid in Catholic times; and that in applying it to the actual circumstances, I do not mean to distinguish between the right and fact in our most gracious sovereign. I only argue *a minori ad majus*, to shew the guilt of attempting any thing against a lawful sovereign, whereas it is high treason to conspire against an usurper.

The famous distinction between "rex de jure," and "rex de facto," how interesting soever in the times of the contending families of

* Vide Blackstone's Commentaries, book I. chap. 10. Coke, 3 Inst. 7. Kel. rep. 15.

of York and Lancaster, James II. and William III. is now of as much importance, as this great question so warmly debated among our grave moralists: "Who is happier, a king awake, " or a cobbler asleep, who dreams that he is a " king?" I do not choose to disturb the rest of *sleeping monarchs*, and whoever has a relish for *dreams*, has my consent, though I like more solid food.

A R T. II.

" AND I do faithfully promise to maintain,
 " support, and defend, to the utmost of my
 " power, the succession of the throne, in his
 " Majesty's family, against any person or
 " persons whatsoever."

Any thing that does not clash with the laws of God,—whatever is conducive to the public good, and has for its immediate object, the peace of society, and avoidance of bloodshed, civil wars, and public calamities,—can be safely sworn to, and the object of a lawful oath; but such is the nature of the second article of the test, which, according to the wise laws of a nation wherein the crown is hereditary in the wearer, equally guards against revolutions so frequent in despotic states, and elective kingdoms. In the first, the prince names his successor;

cessor ; and, as others may think themselves injured by such a partial preference, the throne is as tottering as the succession is arbitrary. Witness the history of the oriental nations.

In elective kingdoms, corruption, violence, and bribery precede the coronation ; bloodshed and misery are the consequences. Poland is no more, because there have been many candidates, but no heir to the throne. Her *liberum veto*, or charter of unbounded liberty to oppose the king, has aided Prussia and Austria in rivetting her chains. Here we know our king from his cradle. The object of our homage depends not on the caprice of a father, nor on the ambition of the nobles. It is determined by the law. As our king never dies, we are exposed to no revolutions by the choice of a successor. “ The
“ order of succession is, in monarchies, founded
“ on the welfare of the state ; it is not fixed for
“ the reigning family ; but because it is the in-
“ terest of the state, that it should have a reign-
“ ing family.”*

A R T.

* Montesquieu, *Esprit des Loix*, vol. II. page 192.

A R T. III.

“ HEREBY utterly abjuring any allegiance
“ or obedience unto the person taking upon
“ himself the style and title of Prince of
“ Wales in the life-time of his father, and
“ who, since his death, is said to have assumed the style and title of King of Great
“ Britain and Ireland, by the name of Charles
“ the third, and to any other person claiming
“ or pretending a right to the crown of these
“ realms.”

The proofs of this article may be seen in the explanation of the first. “ It is impossible to
“ serve two masters.” Allegiance is due to the reigning sovereign, and from the earliest times, to him alone. In whose name is justice administered? “ In the name of George the third.” In whose name are we protected from the midnight robber? “ In the name of George the
“ third,” &c. &c.

Now, sir, I must entreat your patience. You know, that in all parliamentary debates on the oppressive operation of the penal laws, the Stuarts are the greatest obstacle in the Catholics way to a legal indulgence. They are considered by some of the illustrious members, as
the

the polar star by which we expect to steer one day into a haven of safety and deliverance; whilst we ourselves look on them as planets of a malific influence.

“ Aut Sirius ardor,
 “ Ille sitim morbosque ferens mortalibus ægris,
 “ Nascitur, et lævo contristat lumine Cœlum.”

VIRGIL.

To state the case, and disabuse gentlemen, amiable and humane in all other respects, but, unluckily for our interest, too suspicious of a foreign attachment, which we absolutely disclaim, let us view the Stuarts in three respects: first, With regard to the obligations they have conferred on us: 2dly, With regard to what we expect from them: 3dly, With regard to their claims to the crown of England, in quality of descendants of its ancient and rightful kings. If there be no incentive to gratitude on our part,—no right to our allegiance on theirs,—the bonds of attachment are dissolved, and the great panegyrists of our love for the Stuart line, reduced to the alternative of adopting the unreasonable whim of the poet:

“ Amo te, Zabede, sed nescio dicere quare.”

“ I love you, Charles, but I know not why.”

or persuading themselves, that love is kindled
 by

by the flames of tyranny and oppression. The first is absurd; the second unnatural.

First, As to our obligations to this inauspicious family. History can inform you, that James the first signalized his generosity in our favour, by giving, under the finesse of laws, six counties in Ulster to Scotch planters. Hume attempts to justify his countryman by the following shift; "He gave them arts and manufactures in exchange." The cruel Ahab was more generous; he offered real money for Naboth's vineyard. Grateful souls! bless your benefactor: he improved your minds at the expence of your bodies; and, like your preachers in Lent, *famished your flesh to fatten your spirit.*

Charles the first ran the same course with his father. No end of seizures, inquisitions, and regal plunder. Shamed at last into desistance by the Irish parliament, an artful stratagem is devised, equally calculated to answer the ends of rapacity, and exculpate the monarch.

The Earl of Strafford is named vicegerent and takes the blame upon himself: the king thanks him for his seasonable advice; and Ireland sees Tiberius and Sejanus revived in the persons of Charles and his favourite. In these

two reigns pursuits were not extended to goods and chattels alone. The sword of tyranny reached to conscience itself. Spiritual supremacy, and religious uniformity, were enforced with such rigour, that according to Borlase, some of the clergy *used to hang themselves*. A sarcastic remark ! the falsity whereof, was more owing to their constancy, than to the lenity of the Stuarts. Charles the Second, who according to lord Lyttelton, could have become as despotic a prince as any in Europe, sets up a sham court of claims to save the appearance of justice. He confirms Cromwell's grants to the adventurers, who followed the banners of that regicide, tinged with the blood of the royal martyr, obliges his enemies by the sacrifice of his defenders, consents to the special exception of Irish Catholics from the general act of indemnity, refuses the least assistance to Lord R——, who sold his estate to support him during his exile, and gives his sanction to a ridiculous law, declaring it high treason to call the king a Papist. Of all the transgressors of this law, he himself was the most signal, whereas he was confessed and anointed by a Benedictine monk : *and the magistrates must have been very remiss that did not hang him for contravening such an important decree, prohibiting to suspect for religion, a king who practised none.*

“ Nec

"Nec lex æquior ulla est,
 "Quam necis artifices arte perire sua."

OVID.

However, the Irish Catholics can never sufficiently thank him, for not punishing with halter, gibbet, and exenteration, a *requiescat in pace*.

To this long train of Stuart hostilities James the Second is the only exception. As Dissenters and Roman Catholics were equally disqualified, he removed all penal restraints. Religion influenced him, doubtless. But did not his favours and indulgence, extend to Scotch Dissenters, as well as to Irish Catholics? Did not the good of the state, strengthened by the affections and power of its subjects, ever and always weakened by their tepidity and indigence, require then, as it does now, a relaxation of oppressive laws? And was it not the king's interest to endeavour to render all his subjects prosperous and happy? Did he but proceed on a legal plan with the consent of his parliament, without arrogating to himself a dispensing power, which the nation vests in the aggregate body of king, lords, and commons? But can the conduct of James the Second stand the test? Or must not an Irishman be blind in not perceiving the partiality of this cherished twig of the Stuart stem?

Ambition,

Ambition, or love for their subjects, induces kings to exchange the gaieties of a palace for the fatigues of the field, and to fly into the arms of death, from the bosom of sensuality and voluptuousness. But more especially in those critical junctures, when the crown is at stake, and the majesty of the monarch on the point of sinking into the subject, the springs of nature play with an extraordinary elasticity; the radiancy of the throne, glistening in the monarch's eyes, absorbs and eclipses the perception of danger: pride supplies the place of valour, and despair metamorphoses the coward into the hero.

In the vicinity of an army of thirty thousand men, master of the strong holds and garrisons of his realms, at the first report of the Prince of Orange's arrival in England, James the Second, with the apathy of a Stoic, or the timidity of an old woman, throws the royal seals into the Thames, disappears, leaves three kingdoms in the utmost anarchy and confusion, the reigns of government without a hand to manage them, and his subjects uncertain to whom they are to transfer their allegiance.

Instances of the kind are scarce to be met with in the *chronicles of kings*; a hand that would not unsheath a sword in defence of three realms

is better calculated for a muff than a sceptre. Queen Elizabeth almost in sight of an army of fifty thousand Spaniards, reviews her troops, rides through the ranks, animates, incites, encourages her men: "Behold your queen! Victorious, I shall reward you: defeated, I will die with you." But Buchanan's contrast of James the First to queen Elizabeth, is applicable to James the Second.

Rex fuit Elizabeth, nunc veroregina Jacobus.
Error naturæ par in utroque fuit.

In English: "Nature was mistaken in those two extraordinary productions: Elizabeth was a man: James a woman."

Recalled by Tyreconnel from France to Ireland, our Alexander lays siege to Londonderry, from whence he is repelled by a Protestant minister, at the head of a handful of men half famished. This was a glorious contest between a king and a priest: the sword and the gown. Cedant arma togæ.

The banks of the Boyne are quite as inauspicious to his *laurels*. Here, contrary to the advice of his officers, he compels them to encounter a formidable army of fifty thousand veterans, commanded by the ablest generals of
that

that age. Remark his orders and dispositions: With a select party of his army he places himself on Dunmore hill, out of cannon reach; and gives a strict charge to Sarsfield, (lord Lucan) not to fire at his *son*, who was come sword in hand to deprive him of his crown. A boding omen of future victory! In battle, let a general ride up and down to animate his troops, never fire into his quarters: you will gain the field. Seeing the Irish, though dispirited by his partial commands, and unanimated by his example, repel the enemy, and keep the battle in suspense, he cries out "Spare my English subjects, spare my English subjects." Lo, the most beloved king of the Stuart race! Pious, and tender-hearted, he would not have scrupled to repossess himself of the throne at the expence of Irish blood, but the purchase would have been too dear, when acquired with the loss of English subjects.

His daughter, queen Mary, during her husband's absence, ordered *all Papists and reputed Papists*, to depart ten miles from London. Her reign would have swelled the code of penal laws, and expanded the ten miles into a wider circuit, had not king William controuled the spirit of oppression, so co-natural to the Stuarts. Exposed to the power of Lewis the fourteenth, ready to back the claims of an abdi-

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cated

cated king, still grasping at the remains of expiring royalty, William the third never deprived the Catholics of their property. He even allowed the most part of the Catholic gentry, the use of such arms as were necessary for their defence and diversion: a sword and a gun. Their total destruction was completed by the last sovereign of the Stuart line.

Queen Anne, by reducing the leases to 31 years, and introducing the bills of discovery, threw the nation into a convulsion, from whence it can never recover, until more lenient hands slacken the stiff chain of penal restraints. Under the happiest of constitutions, she has made Ottoman slaves, and impressed one of her kingdoms with the traces of Turkish misery.

“Under this sort of government,” says Montesquieu, speaking of the Ottoman empire, “nothing is repaired or improved. Houses are built only for the necessity of habitation: every thing is drawn from, but nothing restored to, the earth: the ground lies untilld, and the whole country becomes a desert.” Whoever travels over the most part of Ireland, can see the description realized. One of her laws whereby it is decreed, “that where the son and heir of a Papist, shall become a Protestant,

"testant, his father shall be tenant for life," is the horror of Christendom, and an indelible stain on her memory. "Laws written in characters of blood," says an illustrious member, in his speech on the Popery bills. This law effectually dissolves the ties of nature, *reverses* filial duty, and subjects a tender and aged father to the empire of a profligate son, who for the sake of pleasure and dissolution, would subscribe the Alcoran in Constantinople, as soon as he would the thirty-nine articles in Dublin, and say with the Count of Bonneval, "In turning Turk I have only exchanged my hat for a turban." It is true, that her victorious generals have *graced* the annals of the queen; but in the eyes of a Christian, her inclemency and ductility, shall for ever *disgrace* the history of the Stuarts.

Hitherto we have taken a retrospective view of our obligations to those our royal *benefactors*: let us now look forward to the agreeable scene, and enchanting prospect of riches and blessings, we expect from their restoration.

In reality, sir, a dear bought experience has broke this charm that bewitched our ancestors in favour of the Stuarts. Whilst they were our kings, we exerted ourselves to support them on the throne, more from principle than

faction; and had other monarchs sway'd the sceptre, we would have done the same. In a word, we fell with our kings, and the very offspring of those kings have chained us closer to the ground. Now the tide of those fatal commotions has subsided. This tumult that distracted the nation in the Stuarts reign is allayed. Are we to quit the reality in pursuit of a shadow? What would we have gained, had the Pretender been crowned at Westminster? An aggravation of our yoke, and new calamities? The penal laws relaxed in their execution by the clemency of government, would have been revived with new vigour. The edge of persecution, blunted by the very humanity of our fellow subjects, would have been new tempered, and sharpened.

You will answer, perhaps, that such usage could not be expected from a *Catholic prince*. Folly! pardon the expression. You know that the throne is the most dazzling object of human ambition. Tho' a great distance from its steps, and the impossibility of obtaining it renders the most part of mortals insensible to its charms, yet in regard to those who are entitled to it by their birth, it is a magnet that attracts their hearts, the great idol, to which they would sacrifice their very blood, and the water of Lethe,

erazing

erazing by its oblivious qualities all impressions of friendship, gratitude, and even religion. Of this, history, both sacred and profane, affords several instances. Athalia murdered the princes of the royal house of Judah. Tullia drove her chariot over her father's body, and dyed its wheels in his blood, from an eagerness to be saluted queen. In the time of the crusades, a Catholic prince was found in the number of the slain, with the marks of circumcision on his body. He expected the kingdom of Jerusalem from Saladin; and this *fervent* Christian, who a few years before would have spilt his blood in defence of Christ's sepulchre, sold Christ himself, for the dominion of a city in which he had been crucified.

I do not mean, sir, that any of our regal candidates would turn Turks for the sake of a crown. But certain I am, that the transition is easy from Popery to Protestantism, and from Protestantism to Popery, when a diadem is the reward of conversion. In my humble opinion, Charles the Third, would have removed Pope and Popery out of his way to the throne. To clear himself from the suspicion of a Popish cancer, the oppression of Papists would have been the best deterrent. A Catholicon very familiar to the Stuarts!

Perhaps

Perhaps I pass a rash judgment on this cherished twig of the Stuart stock : If so, I retract. But all we expect from him is the liberty to *fast and pray* ; this we enjoy without his mediation, and it would be madness to forfeit.

Incapable and unwilling to hurt the public, willing and incapable to serve it ; equally destitute of property and arms to defend it, our duty is confined to passive loyalty, enforced by religion. Let interest and the liberty of purchasing step in as an active principle, you will not find one Catholic in the kingdom but will be as fanguine as yourself in defence of his substance, and the common cause, against Pope or Pretender. We daily see two brothers fight with the animosity of open enemies, for a legacy or a spot of ground. We read of Popes, who in defence of their territories have entered into leagues with Protestant princes, against Catholic powers. Property then is so interwoven with self-preservation, that few or none will run the hazard of losing it in compliment to another, were he even a saint ; and of all mortals the Stuarts are the least entitled to the sacrifice of our acknowledgment.

Yet, as the forwardness of superiors does not evert their authority, and as the descendants of bad princes may have a *rightful* claim, one point

point more remains to be discussed, viz. Whether we can in conscience *renounce all allegiance unto* the grandson of James the Second, whose abdication of the throne has been the effect of *fear and compulsion*? Has not the son a *right* to the estate of which his father has been deprived by force? And in opposing this *right* do I not commit a flagrant injustice?

This important question is to be solved by the fundamental laws of the realm, general principles, grounded on impartial reason, and the ordinary dispensation of Providence, directing the revolutions and vicissitudes of human affairs.

From the earliest times, the laws have decreed, that although the crown be hereditary, yet the right of succession is not *indefeasible*. The English have defeated, and altered the succession as early as the time of Edward the Confessor, who was chosen king during the life of the lawful heir. The history of England affords several instances of the kind, a long time before the accession of the Stuarts to the throne. The law both in present and past times, is, and has been, "That the crown is hereditary in the wearer: that the king and both houses of parliament can defeat this hereditary right, and by particular limitations exclude the immediate

“mediate heir, and vest the inheritance in any
“one else.” Thus not only the Pretender,
but even the present prince of Wales can be
excluded from the throne, with the consent of
the king, lords, and commons.

Grotius, a learned and sanguine stickler for
indefeasible right, tho’ he cannot agree that the
son of a dethroned king, can be lawfully ex-
cluded, yet is forced to acknowledge, that the
same son, if not born whilst his father was in
possession, can be deprived of his right to the
throne with the consent of the people, *because*
such a prince, says he, has no acquired right. Illud
“interest inter natos et nascituros, quod nas-
“cituris nondum quæsitum sit jus, atque adeo
“iis auferri possit populi voluntate.” Grot. de
jure belli. lib. 2. c. 7. 26. This decides for ever
the fate of Charles the Third, who was born
a long time after his grandfather’s expulsion.
It is moreover grounded on the clearest prin-
ciples of reason.

In effect, does reason allow that subjects
should be distracted, between kings in actual
possession of the throne, and the grandsons and
great grandsons of kings who had formerly en-
joyed it? Bound by the law of God to pay
tribute to, and obey the king, whose image is
stamp’d on his coin: Cujus est hæc imago?
Bound

Bound by the dictates of conscience to assert the claims of his rival : to pull down their king with one hand ; to support him on the throne with the other. Carrying within themselves two opposite laws, which mixing and encountering like certain chymical liquors, raise a fermentation that cannot be allayed to the end of time.

Let us suppose that Charles Stuart *had a right* to the throne ; his posterity (if ever he chance to have any) to the last generation will claim the same. Let us suppose the Hanoverian line in possession to the end of time. Lo, a curious fight ! The frame of government turning on two hinges, without being supported by either ; two mathematical lines always approaching, without ever touching, and all future generations balanced and suspended between both, without knowing which of the two to incline to. Good sense, the law of nature, or the general good of mankind, to which the claims and interest of one man should be subordinate, do they admit such rigorous equity ?

Celebrated objection of civilians, canonists, and divines :——

“ Time is no active principle. Every thing is
“ done in time, but nothing by it ; and a long
“ prescription,

“prescription, without a lawful title, is no leni-
 “tive to the alarmed conscience of the posses-
 “sor, nor bar to the claims of the dispossessed.”
 The civil law has decided so. L. 3. 11. 3. ff.
 de acq. vel amit. poss. “Non capit longa pos-
 “sessione qui scit alienum esse.” And the canon
 law, Cap. possessor. de reg. juris. in 6. “Posses-
 “sor malæ fidei ullo tempore non præscribit.”

Answered: If a long prescription, without an original title, cannot secure the consciences of kings and subjects, God help the world! For great kingdoms, if traced back to their origin, are great robberies. “Sine justitia magna reg-
 “na sunt magna latrocinia.”* By this rule, the Stuarts had no *right* to the throne of England: for their original title was defective, as derived from William the Conqueror, an usurper, or from the ancient Saxons who plundered and dispossessed the Britons. How can we calm the consciences of the Dutch, Portuguese, &c. formerly the subjects of Spain? I believe the most scrupulous amongst them are unconcerned for the rights of their former masters.

However, I acknowledge that time alone, without some concurrent cause, cannot legalize a prescription. But in regard to kings and the
 allegiance

* St. Augustine.

allegiance due from their subjects, a great number of reasons supply the deficiency of the original title requisite to commence a prescription, viz. the consent of the greatest and wisest part of a nation,—the acquiescence of the whole community,—the peace of the public, disturbed by factions and civil wars, ever and always attendant on changes in government,—the general good of mankind, inconsistent with the revival of old claims,—in fine, the dispensation of a just God, who visited on Saul's posterity their father's cruel treatment of the Gibeonites, and who positively declares, that 'he wrests the sceptre from one family, to lodge it in the hands of another, in punishment of former crimes.' "Transfert sceptrum de regno et de gente, ad populum alterum." "When the political law has obliged a family to renounce the succession," says the president Montesquieu, "it is absurd to insist on the restrictions drawn from the civil law. It is ridiculous to pretend to decide the rights of kingdoms, of nations, and of the whole globe, by the same maxims on which we should determine the right of a gutter between individuals."*

Further. King James the Second's quitting England, without even appointing a regent, and

* Montesquieu's Spirit of Laws, Vol. II. page 193.

and his subsequent behaviour at the Boyne, is an abdication of the throne, or else there never has been a resignation of royalty. *Fear!* He was intrepid enough before his son-in-law became his competitor; and tho' prince William wanted neither courage nor wisdom, yet his prowess was not so famed in the history of the times, as to strike terror into a tolerable general, much less into the heart of a king, whom an exalted rank, the love of his subjects, and paternal authority, should have animated with courage and resolution. Old captain O'Regan was not afraid when he desired king William's officers "to change generals, and fight the battle over again."*

In times of invasion, thrones cannot be secured without bloodshed. If the fear of a ball cannot dispense subjects with fighting for their prince, the prince is bound to share the danger, or at least to remain in some part of the kingdom to watch and direct their operations. If the safety of the people be the supreme law, *salus populi suprema esto*, and that kings are appointed guardians of the property and lives of their subjects, who in the beginning could have instituted a republican as well as a regal government, the king who prefers his personal safety to that of his subjects, flies into a foreign country.

* Hist. of Eng. in a series of letters, &c.

country, and abandons them a prey to the first occupant, forfeits all right to their allegiance. The law forbids the use of *two weights and two measures*, and there is no justice without equality.

To the Irish, then, king William with propriety might have applied Curio's speech to Domitius's soldiers. "But did you desert Domitius, or Domitius his soldiers? Were you not ready to endure the last extremities, whilst he privately endeavoured to escape? And how can the oath any longer oblige you, when he to whom you swore, having thrown aside all marks of consular dignity, became a private person, and a captive to another?"*

Several generations have decayed and succeeded since James the second has abdicated the throne. Time expunges the impressions of the nearest and dearest connections. We cheerfully converse in walking over the graves of friends, for whom we formerly cried. Had then our attachment to the Stuarts been formed of links of steel, it could not endure to the present generation.

But after having expatiated so long on the claims of a family, commencing in our misfortune

* Cæsar de Bell. Civ. l. 2. c. 13.

fortune and concluding in our ruin, let us attribute to a superior cause the revolutions of kingdoms, and in the very sport of human passions trace the footsteps of divine Providence. "That long concatenation of particular causes, which make and unmake empires, depends upon the secret orders of divine Providence," says the bishop of Meaux. "God from the highest Heavens holds the reigns of all the kingdoms of the earth: he hath all hearts in his hands: sometimes he gives a loose to them; and thereby moveth all mankind. He it is who prepares effects in their remotest causes, and he it is who strikes those great strokes, the counter-stroke whereof is of such extensive consequence. Let us talk no more of chance, or of fortune. What is chance in regard to our uncertain counsels, is a concerted design in a higher counsel. Thereby is verified the saying of the apostle, that God is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who causes all revolutions by an immutable counsel: who gives and takes away power, who transfers it from one man to another, from one house to another, from one people to another, to shew, that they all have it only borrowed, and that it is he alone in whom it naturally resides.*" Let us then

talk

* Bossuet, Histoire Universelle, Vol. 2. p. 403.

talk no more of the Stuarts, but bid them an eternal farewell.

A R T. IV.

“ And I do swear that I do reject and detest as
 “ unchristian and impious to believe, that it
 “ is lawful to murder or destroy any person
 “ or persons whatsoever, for or under pre-
 “ tence of their being heretics, and also that
 “ unchristian and impious principle, that no
 “ faith is to be kept with heretics.”

Any attempt to prove this article would be an idle task, whereas we are sure never to convince, when we attempt to prove things too clear. In a word to buy a piece of cloth, and instead of paying to murder the draper, “ for
 “ or under pretence of his being an heretic,” is a doctrine unknown to the most relaxed of our casuists. We appeal to the gentlemen of different persuasions, to whom restitutions are daily made, through the lands of the Catholic clergy, and to such of them as have been stoppt on the high road, whether the robber has enquired into their religion? Murder is against the fifth commandment; injustice and fraud against the seventh. To suppose then that it is a principle of Roman Catholics to murder or cheat “ any person or persons whatsoever, for
 “ or

“or under the pretence of their being heretics,” is to suppose them ignorant of the commandments of God.

Since the time of the emperor Theodosius, laws have been enacted concerning heresy. Lawyers and divines of both communions have been divided in their opinions: Geneva and London, Calvinist magistrates, and Protestant kings, have concurred with the Spanish inquisitors in blazing the fagot, and *forestalling* the rigour of eternal justice. The writ *De Hæretico Comburendo* (of committing heretics to the flames) was in force down to the reign of Charles the Second, and has met with a learned apologist in Calvin. By the statute and common laws of England, some punishments are still in force against heretics; but how far these and severer punishments inflicted by the civil and imperial laws, are *impious and unchristian*, kings, not subjects, are interested to determine.

In every Christian country, the Christian religion is a part of the national laws; on the other hand, heresy, in its loosest latitude, comprehends errors subversive not only of revealed religion, but moreover of morality, and justice; such as the error of the Priscillianists, authorizing false oaths; and the error of those who give a loose to private and public vices, by denying

nying all rewards and punishments beyond the grave. Should then the supreme magistrate, to whom the right of the sword is reserved, determine the degree of punishment, and instead of imprisonment, banishment, &c. make it capital, let his conscience condemn or acquit him. Every subject should still "reject and detest, as
 "unchristian and impious to believe, that it is
 "lawful to murder or destroy any person or
 "persons whatsoever, for or under the pre-
 "tence of their being heretics." We are never to arrogate to ourselves the power of life and death, which God has intrusted to the legislators, and to them alone.

To Catholic and Protestant magistrates let us, however, venture to propose the advice of St. Bernard: "*Hæretici capiantur non armis, sed argumentis;*" "Let heretics be convinced not with blows, but arguments;" and the opinion of St. Augustine, in his letter to count Marcellin: "No doctrine should strike a
 "deeper horror into the human heart, than
 "that which teacheth that it is lawful to kill
 "any person or persons under pretence of he-
 "resy, and under the mask of religion, spreads
 "the dismal seeds of the greatest evils in the
 "Christian world,—murders, dissensions, wars:"

I

In

* Bernard, in Cant. Serm. 62.

In fine, the opinion of a learned Protestant bishop: "Among all the heresies this age has spawned, there is not one more contrary to the whole design of religion, and more destructive of mankind, than is that bloody opinion of defending religion by arms, and of forcible resistance upon the colour of religion."

However, upon closer inspection into those persecutions which have changed Europe into a scene of Gothic barbarity, we shall find a combination of various causes, amongst which religion was a pretext, passion and policy the main springs.

To clear religion from those bloody imputations, let us contrast the present to the past times: the Huguenots, formerly victims to the policy of Catharine de Medicis, live now in peace and opulence, enjoy their rich estates in Poitou, Lower Normandy, &c. The order of Military Merit is instituted to reward the valour of their officers: and in France no man's religion is a bar to his promotion in the career of military honours, whereas nothing more common than to see the French legions commanded by Protestant generals. Here in Ireland, the Catholics, formerly drove by thousands into woods and caverns, and their clergy hunted like wild beasts, live unmolested, though debarred of the privilege

privilege of becoming soldiers or mayor's sergeants. The respective religions of the two kingdoms are now what they were then : whence proceeds this happy transition from persecution to lenity ? Not from the Christian religion, whose spirit never changes ; but from the different characters of its professors.

The French Huguenots are now under Lewis XVI. They have been formerly under the sway of a Medicis. Formerly under the Stuarts, we are now governed by the Brunswicks. Our magistrates are Protestants, but quite different from those who, instead of redressing grievances, used to foment the rebellion, with a view of enriching themselves by the spoils of oppression. In fine, sir, let us divest ourselves of passion : Religion will never arm our hand with the poniard.

A R T V.

“ I further declare, that it is no article of my
 “ faith, and that I do renounce, reject, and
 “ abjure the opinion, that princes excommu-
 “ nicated by the pope and council, or by
 “ any authority of the see of Rome, or by
 “ any authority whatsoever, may be deposed
 “ or murdered by their subjects, or by any
 “ person whatsoever : and I do promise, that

“ I will not hold, maintain, or abet any such
“ opinion, or any other opinion, contrary to
“ what is expressed in this declaration.”

This article of the test requires a peculiar discussion: as the pope's deposing power has caused such confusion in Europe, during the great struggles between the priesthood and empire, and is often an engine employed in parliament, to defeat the good intentions of the members, who, from principles of humanity and zeal for the prosperity of the kingdom, endeavour to remove the heavy yoke of penal restraints. The question is—Whether the deposing power be an article of the Catholic faith? For my heart startles and my hand recoils, at the words, “ murdered by their subjects.” As if the principles of any sect of Christians authorized a gloomy ruffian to plunge the dagger in the royal breast. To determine the question, let us enquire, first, Into the doctrine of the church concerning the deposing power: secondly, Into its origin.

Resistance to princes has been an early charge against the church: and from her infancy down to this day, her pastors and doctors have repelled the calumny. An *imputed* doctrine then, yet still disclaimed, can never be an article of her faith.

It

It is true that the concessions of princes to the Apostolic see,—an excessive veneration for the first pastor of the church,—flattery in some,—rash zeal in others,—have raised up Bellarmin and some other champions for the deposing power beyond the Alps. But the deviations of some individuals should be considered as spots in the sun, or the misconduct of a citizen whose fault should not be charged upon a large community.

The apologists of the deposing power (now grown obsolete) are few : and their doctrine must either stand or fall with the evidence or inevidence of their arguments, unsupported by authority, and contradicted by the practice and doctrine of all ages and nations.

In the Apostles time, the Jews began to revolt, and sow the seeds of that rebellion which assembled the Roman eagles round their walls, and involved their nation in final destruction : their great pretence was—the seeming impropriety of the subjection of God's chosen people to a heathen dominion : and, as the first converts sprung from the Jews, the Heathens confounded together Jews and Christians, and charged them alike with the doctrine of resistance to subordination and government. The great St. Paul vindicates the Christians, and
lays

lays down for a general rule, "that every soul
 "must be subject to higher powers; that there
 "is no power but from God; and, that those
 "who resist receive damnation unto them-
 "selves."* Should any one reply, that "the
 "church has more power over Christian kings,
 "as by baptism they become her children," it
 can be easily answered, that dominion and tem-
 poral power are founded in free-will and the
 laws of nations, but not conferred nor taken
 away by a spiritual regeneration: and Bellar-
 min himself is forced to acknowledge, that
 "the gospel deprives no man of his right and
 "dominion, but gets him a new right to an
 "eternal kingdom."†

The apostolical constitutions, whether ge-
 nuine or spurious, are certainly of an ancient
 date, and give us great insight into the disci-
 pline of the primitive times. They command
 "to fear the king as God's institution and ordi-
 "nance.‡" "The Christians worship God
 "only," says St. Justin Martyr, "they are
 "subject to the emperors in all things else."§
 "By whose command men are born," says
 St. Irenæus, "by his commands also are kings
 "ordained, as suits the circumstances of those
 "over

* Romans, xiii.

† Bellarmin, de Rom. Pontif. Lib. v. c. 3.

‡ Lib. VII.

§ Apolog. 2.

“ over whom they are set : some for the amend-
“ ment and benefit of their subjects : and some
“ for fear and punishment : for reproof and
“ contempt as the people shall have deserved :
“ the just judgment of God reaching equally to
“ all.” Tertullian, St. Ambrose, St. Augustin, St.
Gregory Nyssen, Optatus Milevitanus, in fine,
all the fathers declare, “ that kings have none
“ above them but God alone, who made them
“ kings : that God bestows the heavenly feli-
“ city on the godly only, but the kingdoms of
“ the earth on both godly and ungodly : and
“ that to him alone, the cruel Marius and the
“ gracious Cæsar, Augustus the best of prin-
“ ces, Nero one of the worst, Constantine the
“ Christian, and Julian the apostate are equally
“ indebted for their authority and power.”

If from the fathers you continue the long chain of venerable antiquity through the successive reigns of the Roman pontiffs, you will find the *deposing power* assumed by few ; the pre-eminence of kings, and their dependence on God alone, asserted by the mildest and most learned, and those by far the greatest number,

St. Gregory the Great, not only disclaims any temporal power over kings, but even acknowledges himself their subject: The emperor

peror insists on the publication of a law. The pope writes to him : " I being subject to your
 " command, have caused the law to be sent
 " into several parts, and because the law agrees
 " not with God omnipotent, I have by letter
 " informed my serene lord. Wherefore I have
 " in both done what I ought, obeyed the em-
 " peror, and not concealed what I thought
 " for God." Eleutherius, Anastasius 2, Gela-
 sius, Symmachus, Gregory 2, Leo 4, Nicholas
 3, Adrian 1, Nicholas 2, John 8, and Celest-
 tin 3, call the king " God's vicar on earth :"
 forbid the priest to " usurp the regal dignity ;"
 and confine the power of the church " to the
 " dispensation of divine, that of the prince to
 " the administration of temporal things."

If you consult cardinals, who have heighten-
 ed the glory of their purple by their learning
 and piety, you will meet with numerous and
 steady asserters of regal independence. " I pre-
 " suppose what is known even to the vulgar,"
 says cardinal Cusanus, " that the imperial cel-
 " situde is independent of the sacerdotal power,
 " having an immediate dependence on God.*
 " Between the kingdom and priesthood, the
 " proper offices of each are distinct, that the
 " king may make use of the arms of the world,
 " and

* Cuf. l. 3. Conc. c. 5.

“and the priest be girt with the sword of the
 “spirit, which is the word of God,” says cardinal Damianus.* In answer to some objections drawn from the conduct of a pope, regular and exemplary in other respects, but too ready to interfere in temporal concerns, this great man replies: “I say what I think, that
 “neither Peter obtained the apostolical principality, because he denied Christ; nor David
 “deserved the oracle of prophecy, because he
 “defiled another man’s bed.” As much as to say, that this pope committed a fault, which he afterwards cancelled by repentance.

If you still fear that the long-sam’d British throne should be overturned by syllogisms, or that the jars of schoolmen may silence the English cannon, (for you have nothing more to apprehend from the pope) I can march to your aid a formidable army of scholastic divines armed *cap-a-pee* in support of regal pre-eminence.—Navar, Durandus, Joan. Paris, Almain. Gerson, Victoria, Thom. Wald. Anton. de Roselli, Ægidius Rom. Ambros. Catharinus, &c. &c. some of whom qualify the deposing power with the epithets of *horrible and seditious*: and others style it *downright madness*.† Add to the foregoing authorities, the council of Constance

* Damianus, Lib. iv. Epist. 9.

† Ambros. Cathar. in 13 Rom. Roselli, de pot. pap.

stance in the year 1415. The declaration of the provincial congregation of the Jesuits at Ghent in the year 1681, and that of the clergy of France in 1682; who declare that "kings and princes by God's ordinance are not subject in temporals to any ecclesiastical power, and that they cannot be deposed directly nor indirectly, by the authority of the keys of the church, neither can their subjects be freed from fealty and obedience, nor absolved from their oath of allegiance." "Reges ergo et principes in temporalibus nulli ecclesiasticæ potestati Dei ordinatione subijci, neque autoritate clavium ecclesiæ directæ vel indirectæ deponi, aut illorum subditos eximi a fide atque obedientia, ac præstito fidelitatis sacramento solvi posse: eamque sententiam, ut verbo Dei, patrum traditioni, et sanctorum exemplis consonam, omnino retinendam."* Even in the canon law it is declared, that "kings acknowledge no superior in temporals:" and that "appeals concerning temporals should not be brought to the pope's tribunal."†

In fine, the deposing power was so unknown in primitive times, that Bellarmin, who has ransacked the works of the fathers, and enriched him-

* Declaratio Cleri Gallicani, anno 1682.

† Cap. si duobus. Extra de appel.

himself with their spoils, in defending the doctrine of the church, could cite none but St. Bernard in support of the novel doctrine of deposition: and yet this father, who mentions two *swords* in the church, only means that in the church are Christian princes invested with the right of the sword: For, in writing to pope Eugenius, the saint uses these remarkable words: “Earthly kingdoms have their judges, “princes and kings. Why do you thrust your “sickle into another man’s harvest? St. Peter “could not give what he had not: did he give “dominion? It is the saying of the Lord in the “gospel, the kings of the gentiles have dominion over them, but you not so. It is plain, “dominion is forbid to apostles. Go now and “dare usurp either dominion with the apostleship, or with the apostleship dominion. You “are plainly forbid the one. If you will have “both, you will lose both: you will be of the “number of those of whom God complains, “they have been princes, and I knew them “not.” *

Bellarmin’s misapplication of St. Bernard’s text, was not the only mistake his antagonists have censured. His wild conjecture, that “the “Christians would have deposed Nero and Julian the Apostate, and the like, had they had “the

* St. Bernard, Lib. 2. de Confid.

"the power to do so," raised the indignation of
 the Catholic universities. "Quod si Christiani
 "olim non deposuerint Neronem, et Julianum
 "Apostatum, et similes, id fuit quia defuerant
 "vires temporales Christianis."* The decision
 was considered by the Catholic divines, as
 more becoming the scarlet robe of the stern
 Brutus, who beheaded his children for siding
 with their king, than the purple of the Christian
 cardinal. It was *revised* by the university of
 Paris; *corrected* by the hangman with a blazing
 fagot; and contradicted by the unexceptionable
 testimony of Tertullian and St. Augustine.
 "Should we want numbers or forces, if we
 "had a mind to be open enemies?" says Ter-
 tullian. "Are the Moors, and Marcomans,
 "and Parthians, and whatever nations of one
 "place, and confined to their own limits, more
 "than those of the whole world? We are but
 "men of yesterday; and yet have filled all the
 "places you have,—your cities, islands, castles,
 "boroughs, councils, and camp itself, your
 "tribes, courts, the senate, and the market.
 "We have left you only the temples. For
 "what war are not we fit and ready, (even
 "though we were inferior in number) who en-
 "dure death so willingly, if in this discipline
 "it

* Bellarmin, de Rom. Pontif. Lib. v. c. 7.

"it were as lawful to kill as to be killed?"*

"They could at their pleasure have deposed

"Julian," says St. Augustine, "but would not

"because they were subject for necessity, not

"only to avoid anger, but for conscience and

"love, and because our Lord so commanded."†

In effect, sir, laying aside the truth of history, had Peter and Paul been as willing to depose kings, *for the glory of God, and the propagation of religion*, as some of our modern zealots of all communions, how could Nero have withstood those apostles, whose word alone was to Ananias and Saphira a messenger of death, struck the magicians blind, and raised the dead to life?

I say, *of all communions*: for in every communion there are men of deposing principles, which their religion disclaims. "Iliacos intra
"muros peccatur et extra." Doleman, Buchanan, Milton, Johnson, † Hobbes, Hoadly, Locke, and several other advocates of republican principles, and sticklers for popular rights, are more dangerous than Bellarmine, who disowns the deposing power, except in the case of a prince forcing his subjects to change their religion: "Si enim tales principes non conentur
"fideles

* Tert. Apol. c. 37.

† In Psal. 124.

‡ Not the compiler of the Dictionary.

“fideles a fide avertere, non existimo posse eos
 “privari suo dominio.”* A *salvo* which, I
 hope, will remove all umbrage and suspicion
 from the minds of our governors: as they do
 not reckon persecution in the number of their
 cardinal virtues: even if they did, resistance is
 not a principle of the Catholic religion.

But I am clearly of opinion, that had Mr.
 Locke, the wisest and most moderate of those
 English writers, been an officer in Julian's ar-
 my, he would have *reasoned* the soldiers into
 open rebellion. He that compares subjects, who
 would brook the violence and oppression of
 their supreme rulers, to fools, “who take care
 “to avoid what mischiefs may be done them
 “by pole-cats or foxes, but are content, nay
 “think it safety to be devoured by lions;”†
 and illustrates his doctrine with the following
 example: “He that hath authority to seize my
 “person in the street, may be opposed as a
 “thief and a robber, if he endeavours to break
 “into my house to execute a writ, notwith-
 “standing that I know he has such a warrant,
 “and such a legal authority, as will empower
 “him to arrest me abroad. And why this
 “should not hold in the highest, as well as in
 “the most inferior magistrate, I would gladly
 “be informed.”†

Here

* Bellarmin. de Rom. Pontif. l. v. c. 7.

† Locke on Government, p. 253. ‡ Ibid. page 343.

Here you see a *philosophical* freedom breaking the shackles of restraint and *ceremony*, and under the pretence of redressing imaginary grievances, introducing real mischief and a state of nature, wherein the most factious and daring adventurers would take the lead. "For this devolution of power to the people at large, includes in it a dissolution of the whole form of government established by that people," says judge Blackstone, "reduces all the members to their original state of equality, and by annihilating the sovereign power, repeals all positive laws whatsoever before enacted. No human laws will therefore suppose a case, which at once must destroy all law."* "Wo to all the princes upon earth," says a Protestant archbishop, "if this doctrine (*of resistance*) be true and becometh popular: if the multitude believe this, the prince, not armed with the scales of the Leviathan, can never be safe from the spears and barbed irons, which ambition, presumed interest, and malice will sharpen, and passionate violence will throw against him. If the beast we speak of but knows its own strength, it will never be managed."†

" But

* Blackstone's Com. b. 1. p. 162.

† Creed of Mr. Hobbes, examined by the archbishop of Canterbury.

“ But the same equality of justice and freedom that obliged me to lay open this,” says the bishop of Sarum, “ ties me to tax all those who pretend a great heat against Rome, and value themselves on their abhorring all the doctrines and practices of that church, and yet have carried along with them one of their most *pestiferous opinions*,* pretending reformation when they would bring all under confusion; and vouching the cause and work of God, when they were destroying the authority he had set up, and opposing those impowered by him: and the more piety and devotion such daring pretenders put on, it still brings the greater stain and imputation on religion, as if it gave a patronacy to those practices it so plainly condemns.”† The borders of the Thames and Tweed afford then advocates for the *deposing power*, as well as the banks of the Tyber and Po.

On the banks of the Tyber a bigotted Divine vests in the pope an *indirect power* over wicked kings. On the banks of the Thames an enthusiastic Englishman vests in the subject a *direct power* over his sovereign. Religion points out an intermediate course, without giving

* The bishop's *heat against Rome* often mistakes or disguises their real *opinions*.

† Sermon of subjection.

ing a *patronacy* to reveries, and mankind shall always find their account, better in mediums, than in extremes. The doctrine of the Italian has fattened the German soil with dead bodies, and induced a pope* to attempt placing his flesh and blood on the throne of the Cæsars. The doctrine of the Englishman has placed dray-men and coblers in the seats of British peers; and by an extraordinary vicissitude in bringing a king to the block in England, raised a taylor to the throne in Germany.†

Such are the fruits of those two systems, equally pernicious to the safety of kings, and the peace of society. Their respective authors, in striking from the plain road of the Christian doctrine, "Let every soul be subject to higher powers," into the airy paths of speculation, have busied themselves in pursuit of a plan the most alarming to mankind. Kings were beheaded, and others deposed, before some of those authors had published their works, it is true: but ^{are} they ~~the~~ the more justifiable in publishing a doctrine which may tincture the scaffold a second time? The difference between them is, that the Englishman, in terse and popular language, engages the imagination; adorns his subject by a long chain of deductions;

K makes

* Alexander VI.

† John of Leyden, a taylor, made king of Munster.

makes truth bend to argument, reality to appearance; and is read by all. In this great arsenal, every common reader can find arms to reduce his king to reason; the shipwright and carpenter are enabled, by the rules of political logic, to trim the *vessel* of state, and steer it through the unbounded ocean of constitutional liberty. But the ultramontane divine, *bristling* with barbarous Latin, is not read by one in three millions. Powdered with dust, and stretched on the shelf of a college-library, he sleeps as sound as Endimion in his cave; and more is the pity: for his doctrine of the deposing power is founded on as solid proofs as the history of that Spaniard who made a voyage to the moon; and displayed in a style not inferior to that of Valentine and Orson. Of his style and arguments I send you the following *sample*:

“ Probatur per similitudinem ad artem *frani-*
 “ *factoriam** et equestrem. Ut enim duæ ille ar-
 “ tes sunt inter se diversæ, quia distincta habent
 “ objecta, et subjecta, et actiones; et tamen
 “ quia finis unius ordinatur ad finem alterius,
 “ ideo una, alteri præest, et leges ei præscribit:
 “ ita videntur potestas ecclesiastica et politica,
 “ distinctæ

* New-coined Latin, much of the same date with the deposing power.

“ distinctæ potestates esse ; et tamen una alteri
 “ subordinata, quoniam finis unius ad finem al-
 “ terius natura sua refertur.” “ That the pope
 “ has an indirect power in temporals is proved
 “ by the example of the art of making bridles,
 “ and the art of riding : for as these two arts
 “ are different, because they have different ob-
 “ jects, and subjects, and actions : and not-
 “ withstanding, because the end of one is ap-
 “ pointed for the end of the other, therefore one
 “ presides over the other, and prescribes laws
 “ to it : in like manner, the ecclesiastical and
 “ political powers seem to be distinct powers,
 “ and the one nevertheless subordinate to the
 “ other, because the end of the one is by its
 “ own nature referred to the end of the other.”

There, sir, is *learned* gibberish, *saddling* the pope on the backs of kings, by Aristotle's metaphysics, the *object*, *subject*, *action*, *relation*, and *end* of *bridle-making*.

Another advocate for the deposing power disapproves the simile : “ Because,” says he, very gravely, “ if the art of riding were taken
 “ away, bridles would be useless : but the poli-
 “ tical power can subsist without the ecclesiasti-
 “ cal.” “ Si enim non sit ars equestris, super-
 “ vacanea est ars frænorum faciendorum :”*

K 2

An

* Bellarmin, lib. v. de Rom. Pontif.

An attempt to rectify the lameness of the comparison, by one quite as lame. If I had not the authority of a cardinal to apologize for an absurdity, I should not mention it, for fear of being censured: but I expect, that, with his eminence's passport, it will be well received by the public. He compares then the pope to a *shepherd*, and the king to *aries*. "Pastori est
 " potestas triplex: una circa lupos, altera circa
 " arietes, tertia circa oves: unde debet arietem
 " furiosum depellere."*

You have in these two similes as solid arguments in favour of the deposing power, as Albertus Phigius and Bellarmin have ever advanced in support of their hypothesis: and to them and their authors, I grant the same passport the satirist granted Annibal in crossing the Alps:

" I, demens, et sævas curre per Alpes,
 " Ut pueris placeas, et declamatio fias."†

You are to expect some scripture, in like manner: for there never has been an error, how monstrous soever, but scripture was quoted to give it some colour. Arians, Eutychians, Nestorians have wrested the sacred writings to a wrong sense. The advocates for the deposing power had done the same. They quote St. Paul, who

* Bellarmin, *ibidem*.

† Juvenal, *sat. x.*

who blames the Corinthians for pleading before heathen magistrates. This proves that you and I could depose a king, because we would advise our neighbour to avoid troublesome and scandalous law-suits, and leave the decision to the arbitration of two honest neighbours. "Jehoiada, the high priest, ordered queen Athalia to be slain.* Ergo, the pope has an indirect power over bad kings."

This proves a *direct* power, not only to depose, but to murder them: a power which neither Bellarmin nor any Catholic divine has ever vouched. Secondly: Athalia, who had murdered all the princes of the royal house of Judah, except Joash, was no longer queen, when the sentence was passed on her; for the young prince was crowned in the temple, and recognized by his subjects. His minority could not have deprived him of the right of the sword: and Jehoiada acted as minister of state, not in his pontifical character. This evinces Bellarmin's blunder in confounding together the queen and subject, the pontiff and counsellor. Thirdly: during the six years she swayed the sceptre, none of her subjects revolted against her, much less did the pious pontiff absolve them from their allegiance, though she re-established Baal's worship, and maintained his priests in the temple of

* Fourth Book of Kings.

of the true God. A circumstance which Bellarmine should have attended to, had he a mind to read his condemnation. Solomon deposed Abiathar, the high priest: will Bellarmine grant me the liberty to infer from this fact, that kings can depose popes?

Such are the ridiculous shifts to which the patrons of a bad cause are inevitably reduced! Wild and unnatural similes, or facts that prove too much, and can be justly retorted on themselves. Am I accountable for their folly? Or must an Irish Catholic starve, because an Italian wrote nonsense in bad ~~Italian~~ *Latin*, two hundred years ago?

Had he not slackened the reins of an enthusiastic imagination, and let it loose to its random flights, he could have spared himself the trouble of soaring to Heaven, in pursuit of this offspring of human ambition, or the zeal of earthly kings. For that the deposing power originated either in privileges granted by pious zeal, or covenants entered into and sealed by ambition, history leaves no room to doubt, and religion forbids to believe otherwise.

Let us begin at home. Inas, king of the west Saxons, renders his kingdom tributary to the Holy See. This concession paves the way to
future

future claims. Henry the second solicits and obtains a bull from pope Adrian, in order to invade Ireland. The pope grants it: but, in blessing this new dish that is to be served on the English monarch's table, he carves his own portion. And why not? The one had as good a right to it as the other.

It is inserted in the bull, that 'the annual pension of one penny from every house should be saved to St. Peter.' If the holy father and his *dear and illustrious son*, as he styles him, had afterwards quarrelled about the spoils, the religion of the subject should not be concerned in the dispute. King John, in his contestations with Philip Augustus of France, appeals to the pope, and renders him the arbiter of rights that should be decided by the sword. The French monarch lays in his exceptions to the pope's tribunal, as incompetent in such a case. The Englishman chooses a master. Lo, the gradual progression of the pope's temporal power in Great Britain. It takes its first rise from piety,—acquires additional degrees of strength by ambition,—and is confirmed by the weakness of English monarchs. Hence queen Elizabeth's excommunication, and the absolution of her subjects from their allegiance by pope Sixtus, were more owing to *Peter's Pence* than

to *Peter's keys*. The noise of the thunder of the Vatican did not reach Sweden or Denmark, because the effluvia of their mines, and the filings of their gold were never carried by royal stipulations into the regions of the Italian atmosphere, to kindle into flames and cause an explosion. But queen Elizabeth could not have pleaded a hundred years prescription against the court of Rome. "Pope Paul IV. was surprized at her boldness, in assuming the crown, "a fief of the Holy See, without his consent."* Remark in the word (*fief*) a temporal claim, but no divine title.

If from Great Britain we pass into Germany, we can trace the rise and progress of the deposing power, in the grants of crowned heads, in pacts and stipulations, and in mutual favours and offices of friendship.

In the eighth century, when the citizens of Rome were harassed by the Lombards, and slighted by the Greeks, their lawful masters, Charlemagne marches to their assistance, defeats the Lombards, is crowned by pope Leo III. and saluted emperor by the senate and people of Rome. Nicephorus, who afterwards usurped the throne of Constantinople, sends Ambassadors to the new emperor, and consents to the dismembering of an empire sinking under its

* Burnet.

its own weight, and exposed to the first soldier of fortune who had address to form a faction, and courage to plunge the dagger into the breast of the tyrant who filled the throne. What Leo III. has done, proved no right (if it proves any) but that of the law of nature, which authorizes a man, beset by his enemies, to call for assistance to the first who is willing to lend it, and in the effusions of gratitude to thank his deliverer. Bellarmin then has lost his labour in writing a book, to prove that the pope has transferred the empire from the Greeks to the Germans, the better to give some colour to the "baseless fabric" of the deposing power; for Leo III. did not deprive the Eastern princes of a foot of ground.

The empress Irene, afterwards dethroned by Nicephorus, retained her dominions after the coronation of Charles, who acquired nothing by the title of emperor, but a *sounding* compliment. All subsequent accessions were either by right of conquest, the tacit or express consent of the Greeks, or the choice of the senate and Roman people, who preferred a powerful and useful stranger, to a weak and useless master.

The compliment, however, laid the foundation of a power strengthened by the emperor's
and

will, sent to Rome for the pope's approbation, and raised to the highest altitude, by Charles the Bald's purchasing the Imperial Crown, for a sum of money, from pope John VIII. Hence fœderal transactions, promises confirmed by oath, pacts and stipulations between popes and emperors, who used to swear on St. Peter's tomb, and subscribe the conditions imposed on them. In the great struggles between the two powers, the popes grounded their claims on custom and oaths, as may be seen in several passages of the canon law. "Adstrin-
 "gere vinculo juramenti," says pope Clement V. "prout tam nos observationis antiquæ tem-
 "poribus novissimis renovatæ, quam forma ju-
 "ramenti hujusmodi sacris inserta canonibus
 "manifestant."* *Jus divinum*, divine right, or a plenitude of apostolic power, was out of the question.

In effect, sir, before the tenth century, there have been as bad kings, and good popes as ever since. The cause of religion was equally interesting, and religion itself more violently persecuted. The Roman pontiffs had the same spiritual authority, the promotion of piety and faith equally at heart, and in the great number
 some

* Clementin. Roman. Princip. de jurej.

some were influenced by different passions and views. For in this mortal life, we all retain some impressions of the frailty of our origin.

Yet neither piety, nor ambition, the propagation of faith, nor the reformation of morals, ever induced them to attempt the deposing of kings, or arrogating to themselves a power disclaimed by the Saviour of the world, convicted of falsehood by his apostles, and unheard of in the church for the space of ten ages. Why have some of the succeeding pontiffs deviated from the primitive path? I say *some*, because it would be unjust to charge them all alike. They are distinct individuals succeeding one another in the same throne, and one is as much to be blamed for the faults of his predecessor, as George III. is accountable for the licentiousness of Charles II.

Why have some of them deviated from the primitive path? It is that they had prescription and privilege to plead, oaths and treaties to support their claims. In the conduct of kings, choosing them for arbiters to their quarrels, covers to their usurpations, and liege Lords of their territories, they found a specious pretext to punish the infraction of treaties, and the breach of prerogative. A repetition of the same acts introduced custom, custom obtained the power

power of law, the law bound the parties concerned, and the violation of the law has been attended with penalties. Hence the deposition of an emperor was more owing to the code and pandects of Justinian, than to the gospel of Christ. The popes who stretched their prerogative beyond the bounds of moderation, were blamed by the Catholics themselves, whose religion was in no wise concerned in the quarrels of their superiors, and the few enthusiastic flatterers, who have attempted to lodge *Paul's sword* and *Peter's keys* in the same hand, and to make an universal monarch of the vicar of a crucified God, who acknowledged the power of a Heathen magistrate, have injured religion, and betrayed either their madness or ignorance. They have confounded fact with right, the unalterable dogmas of faith with the flux and changeable customs of men, and built a Chalcedon, though they had a Byzantium before their eyes.

They should have considered, that the church pleads antiquity, and that her criterion of truth, and test of sound doctrine, is that golden rule of Vincentius Lerinensis: "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.*" "What has been held ever, and every where, and by all, ever." The deposing power was never heard of, for the space of one thousand and eighty-seven

seven years, from St. Peter to Gregory VII: a great chasm this! and the chain of tradition must be very short, when you take off a thousand and eighty-seven links.

The apostles and their successors preached the Christian doctrine in all its rigour. They taught kings to cherish the cross in their hearts, before it was displayed in their banners, and to prefer a heavenly before an earthly throne. Had they thought (and who could know better?) that the power to depose them, and to absolve their subjects from their allegiance, were conducive to the glory of God and the honour of religion, they never would have concealed it, much less would they have commanded to obey them.

Every where and by all. The deposing power though grounded as I remarked before, on temporal claims, has been opposed by the Catholics from its birth. In Germany by open force and bloody wars: in Ireland, whose kings and prelates paid no attention to the famous bull of pope Adrian: In England by a solemn declaration, 16 Rich. II. Even under Elizabeth, a Protestant queen, the English Catholics joined their sovereign, and paid a greater regard to the command of St. Paul, *obey the prince*, than to the dispensation of Sixtus

ius Quintus, or the expectation of being relieved by a Catholic king, which made the Spanish admiral say, "that if he had landed, he would have made no distinction between a Catholic and a Protestant, save what distinction the point of his sword would have made between their flesh." I believe it; for a conqueror's sword is an undistinguishing weapon, were even a crucifix tied to the hilt of it. In invading England, it is the enemy of Spain, not the enemy of the mass, the Spaniards would attack; were they here this instant, they would not deprive a Protestant of his estate, because it belonged three hundred years ago to some old Milesian, whose posterity is now at the plough; it would not be their interest, the laws of conscience and conquest forbid it, and the rivals of England will always find their interest in the poverty and defenceless situation of her subjects.

In fine, the pope's temporal power has been baffled by the Venetians in their contests with Paul V. And in France, whoever would argue in its favour would be confuted with a halter, or galley chain.

According to the canon law, a hundred years prescription in temporals can be pleaded against the Church of Rome. "Contra ecclesiam Ro-

"manam

“manam valet præscriptio centum annorum.”

A hundred years and more have elapsed, since no pope has attempted to dispose of kingdoms, or absolve subjects from their allegiance, though armies have been poured into the pope's territories, and his cities taken by Catholic princes. Out of his own states, his temporal prerogative is confined to a palfrey he receives from the king of Naples every year, as a customary homage. The two late popes have absolutely disclaimed any temporal power over kings. Thus, things have returned back into the former channel of primitive simplicity: *God has his own, and Cæsar his due*; and the two powers which men had confounded, and blended into *one* Delphian sword, equally adapted to the ministry of the altar and profane uses, are again divided.

In tracing thus the temporal power, we have chosen a medium between the enthusiasm of some Italians, and the prejudices of their antagonists. The picture drawn by those different painters, is all light or shadow. In resolving it into the grants of kings and civil contracts, prescription and a colourable title, as its first principles, we prefer the middle tints: and in measuring the portrait by this rule, we give it its due dimensions.

A R T.

A R T. VI.

“ AND I do solemnly, in the presence of God,
“ and of his only Son Jesus Christ my Re-
“ deemer, profess, testify, and declare, that I
“ do make this declaration, and every part
“ thereof, in the plain and ordinary sense of
“ the words of this oath, without any evasion,
“ equivocation, or mental reservation, what-
“ ever; and without any dispensation already
“ granted by the pope, or any authority of
“ the see of Rome, or any person whatever;
“ and without thinking I am or can be ac-
“ quitted before God or man, or absolved of
“ this declaration, or any part thereof, al-
“ though the pope, or any other person or
“ persons, or any authority whatsoever, shall
“ dispence with, or annul the same, or de-
“ clare that it was null and void from the
“ beginning.”

This last paragraph excludes amphibologies, evasions, equivocations, and mental reservations everfive of natural candour and Christian sincerity,—branded by the pastors of the church with the odious qualifications of “ rash, scan-
“ dalous, pernicious, erroneous, opening the
“ way to lies, frauds, perjury, and contrary to
“ scripture,” as may be seen in the catalogue of
relaxed

relaxed propositions condemned by pope Innocent XI. and the clergy of France *, and detested by the very heathens :

“ Ille mihi invisus pariter cum faucibus Orci,
 “ Cujus mens aliud condit quam lingua profatur.”

Upon these principles, the Catholics have taken the oath : and on these principles, it can be safely taken. It proposes nothing to their abhorrence and detestation, but what they really abhor and detest : it requires no promise but what is just and lawful.

But as the oath is complicate, and perplexed with a variety of phrases,—as it minces even a syllable,—and that the *letter* seems to clash with the *spirit*,—it is not surprising if many objections have been started against it.

Objections from the Hibernian Journal :

First : “ In swearing to support the succession of the crown in his majesty’s family, I bind myself to that which there is a possibility a loyal subject to the constitution might not have in his power to perform.”

Answer. You are not bound to impossibilities ; neither does the oath require it, whereas it expresses, “ to the utmost of my power.”

L

Secondly :

* Propositio 27, inter condemnatas ab Innoc. XI.

Secondly : “ I am bound to take the oath *in the plain and ordinary sense of the words* : consequently, though untrained to arms, and unskilled in military discipline, I must run to the field of battle, in case of invasion or rebellion : otherwise, I do not exert myself to *the utmost of my power.*”

Answer. You serve your king to “ the utmost of your power,” by remaining at home. You would only cause disorder : and an army in disorder flies to the slaughter-house, not to victory : “ Non ad victoriam, sed ad lanienam.*” The magistrate supports his king, “ to the utmost of his power,” in maintaining the public peace : the surgeon, in dressing the soldiers wounds : the clergyman, in preaching loyalty and subordination, regularity and good morals, fraternal love and mutual benevolence. The king requires no more : and, as you write a great deal, under the signature of “ An old Derryman,” all his majesty expects from one of your age, is—to *light the fire*, and to be hospitable, when his soldiers are quartered on you.

Thirdly : “ In swearing that I cannot be absolved of this allegiance, *by any authority whatsoever*, I deny the supremacy of the lords and commons.”

Answer.

* Vegetius de re Militari.

Answer. Your objection is grounded on error. The supreme power of the state is vested in the parliament, composed of king, lords, and commons.*

Fourthly : “ What happened once may happen again. If the king attempts to overturn the constitution, I must help him, if I pay any regard to my oath, and thus betray my country : or perjure myself, if I refuse assistance.”

Answer. Left “ what hath happened once, may happen again,” say with the royal prophet, “ Domine salvum fac regem,” “ God save the king !” However, to allay your anxieties, remember that subjects do not swear to kings, as robbers or pirates swear to their leaders. You are not bound to help a king in his attempts against the laws of God and nature, when you have *clear* evidence that his attempts tend to the subversion of both ; neither doth the test require, whereas, “ true allegiance” is expressly mentioned. But in a doubt you are bound to obey ; because in a doubt concerning the rectitude of their intentions, or the justice of their cause, presumption is in favour of your superiors.

L 2

What

* Blackstone's Comment. B. 1. Ch. 2. p. 147.

What a kingdom! If all the inhabitants were astronomers, metaphysicians, and casuists, who would neither obey nor promise to be loyal to their sovereigns, until they would have read in the stars the fate of the constitution, and explored the remote regions of metaphysics in search of the essential and demonstrative relations of unalterable truth to Magna Charta; Gulliver's floating island would be the fittest kingdom for such aërial inhabitants.

Further: If the remote and possible danger of the constitution's overthrow, or the subversion of the fundamental laws of any realm, were a sufficient objection against oaths of allegiance, either all the distinguished subjects of the world are perjured, or no king is entitled to their allegiance. For in swearing to their respective sovereigns, I do not believe that British peers, French nobles, or Spanish grandees, with all the delicacy of honour, Catholic or Protestant bishops, with all their divinity, use the following form of words: "I will bear allegiance to your majesty, if you behave as an honest man, and do not overturn the constitution."

Before the royal head is encircled with the diadem, the monarch obtests the awful name of the Divinity, and swears that he will govern his subjects

subjects in "justice and mercy." They acknowledge their sovereign and swear to be loyal. His future conduct, and the inconstancy of his will, are left to him who holds in his hands the hearts of kings, who, by the laws of England "can do no wrong." The legislative power retains a right, and has the means of examining in what manner the laws are executed or infringed, by bringing the king's counsellors to a strict account. "But whatever may be the issue of this examination," says Montesquieu, "the king's person is sacred, the moment he is arraigned or tried, there is an end of liberty."* The constitution then is equally in danger, of being overturned by a refusal of allegiance, "applicable not only to the regal office of the king, but to his natural person and blood royal."†

Objections from the *Hibernian Magazine*.

First: "No man can safely swear to a thing of which he is not certain. Now the test obliges the Catholics to decide by oath, that they have positive and clear reasons not to believe that any foreign prince *ought* to have any civil pré-eminence within this realm. Now, what individual can pretend to so deep
" an

* Spirit of Laws, vol. 1. p. 181.

† Blackstone's Com. Vol. 1. p. 371.

“an insight into the much debated rights of
 “princes as to determine with certainty on so
 “difficult and so abstruse a question; especially
 “as the words *ought* and *right*, extend to any
 “kind of *right*, whether natural, i. e. by right
 “of blood, or acquired.”

Answer. The test obliges the Catholics to no such thing. All it requires is a negative belief, or a suspension of belief, concerning the rights of foreign princes, (*and I do declare that I do not believe.*) The paragraph is worded in a negative style. But in a negative oath, ignorance of another man's right exculpates the person who swears from perjury. A familiar example will set the matter in a clear light. Paul is in possession of a farm from time immemorial; this possession, and several other strong reasons incline me to believe, that he is the only rightful and lawful owner. Peter revives a dormant claim, which in my opinion is but a shadow. A magistrate interrogates me in this manner: *Do you believe that Peter ought to have a right to Paul's farm?* I answer, *I do declare that I do not believe it.* In the name of goodness, whatever Peter's title may be, do I perjure myself in swearing to what is really my opinion?

The word *right* is not mentioned in the oath, and in case it were, the objector's distinction,
 betwixt

betwixt natural and acquired would give him no advantage; for with regard to civil pre-eminence and jurisdiction over free states, there is no *right* when the laws of nations are against it.

In France, the Salique law excludes females from inheriting the throne. Has the king's eldest daughter any right to it? In Portugal, where the crown is hereditary, the law disqualifies every stranger who lays claim to the throne by right of blood. Have foreign princes, though related to the royal family, any *right to civil pre-eminence* within that realm?

Secondly: "The words, *ought to have*, seem
 "to have a retrospect to the revolution, where-
 "by James II. was deprived of the throne, be-
 "cause he was a Roman Catholic: for some
 "members have affirmed, that no one could
 "take this oath, but on revolution-principles.
 "If this be so, I swear what is equivalent to this
 "—*The being a Roman Catholic is a just and rea-*
 "*sonable disqualification for not enjoying hereditary*
 "*right.* What Protestant in his senses would
 "not think me perjured when I swear in this
 "manner."

Answer. Every Protestant, if such were the meaning of the oath; but neither the sense nor
 letter

letter of the oath is susceptible of such a forced construction. The framers of the test have blended together an oath of allegiance, and the old declaration against Popery, compiled by James I. In this declaration, the words ran thus : " And I do declare, that I do not believe " that the pope of Rome, &c. hath or ought " to have * any authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm." By this declaration translated into English, and still to be seen in the statutes, the Roman Catholics were obliged to renounce the pope's spiritual supremacy, otherwise they had nothing to expect but halters and gibbets from our *beloved* Stuarts. The Senators of 1775, more humane than the royal pedant of 1603, have expunged in favour of distressed subjects, the words *ecclesiastical* and *spiritual*, and substituted *temporal* and *civil* in their place. Thus have they enabled the Catholics, to testify their loyalty without swearing against their conscience. The words " ought " to have," *have then no retrospect to James II.* who deprived himself of the throne, by quitting the realm, after having *abdicated* the constitution, by arrogating to himself a dispensing power.

Thirdly : " Marriage is founded on a *civil* " contract, though of divine institution, and " a sacra-

* Habet vel debet habere.

“ a sacrament in the belief of Catholics. In
“ denying the *pope's civil power directly or in-*
“ *directly within this realm*, so far at least I deny
“ the church's authority over a sacrament.”

Answer. A flat sophism ! The pope has no civil power direct or indirect in this realm, over any sacrament, but a spiritual power *ratione Sacramenti*, precisely as a sacrament, and so far it is a spiritual thing. In virtue of my ordination, I have power to consecrate bread and wine, have I any *civil power* over the baker's shop, or the vintner's cellar ?

Fourthly : “ I swear that I do not think that I
“ can be absolved of this declaration, or any
“ part thereof, although any authority what-
“ soever shall dispense with or annul the same.
“ Now, *authority whatsoever* is of universal im-
“ port. It includes the supreme authority of
“ the state, the authority of God himself. Can
“ a Catholic or Protestant swear that neither
“ God, nor the state can absolve him of any
“ part of this declaration ? whereas God can de-
“ prive a tyrannical king of his throne, and the
“ supreme authority of the state can absolve a
“ subject from his allegiance, and permit him to
“ retire to whatever place he chuses, as a master
“ can manumit a slave.”

Answer.

Answer. By "authority whatsoever," is not meant the authority of God, nor the supreme authority of the state, but the authority of Rome, or foreign authority.

Fifthly. "The oath is to be taken in the *plain*
 " *and ordinary sense of the words.* *Authority what-*
 " *soever,* in the plain and ordinary sense of the
 " words, includes the authority of God and the
 " state."

Answer. The plain and ordinary sense of any word, is the sense annexed to it, by the common consent and custom of mankind, according to their respective idioms and languages: but, in any legal act, mankind never extends the words "authority whatsoever" to the authority of God, who is above the control of human laws, nor to the supreme authority of the state, which is never presumed to bind its own hands, whereas it is an invariable maxim in human laws, that the same power which enacts them, can repeal and dispense with them. "Per
 " *quascunque causas res nascitur, per easdem*
 " *solvitur.*"

Sixthly: "The oath forbids *mental reserva-*
 " *tions* on pain of perjury. Now mental refer-
 " vation is a proposition, which taken accord-
 " ing to the natural import of the terms, is
 " false;

“false; such is this proposition, *I declare that*
“*no authority whatsoever can dispense with any*
“*part of this oath*; according to the natural
“import of the terms, it is false, because God
“and the state can dispense with a part of it:
“but if qualified by something concealed
“in the mind, (*v. g. except God or the state*) it
“becomes true. In that very proposition,
“there is a mental reservation, the great re-
“fuge of religious hypocrites, who accommo-
“date their consciences with their interests.”

Answer. The definition is just, but proves nothing. For reservations were introduced in order to deceive the person to whom we swear. But the magistrates, in whose presence we take the oath, know that by *authority whatsoever*, is not meant the authority of God, nor that of the state.

Seventhly: “The last paragraph of the test,
“tends to contradict an established doctrine of
“the Catholic church, which is, that in the
“church there is vested a power of examining
“into the nature of oaths, (which are acts of
“religion) and of determining whether they
“be, or be not lawful.”

Answer. The test does not deprive the church of the power of examining into the lawfulness oaths. The last paragraph is entirely levelled

levelled against the dispensing power : the right of examination is quite out of the question. *Without thinking that I can be acquitted of this declaration, &c.*

Eighthly. " A fundamental article of the Catholic faith, is the infallibility of the church. This article is reversed by these words *without thinking that I am or can be acquitted of any part of this declaration, although the pope or any authority whatsoever, shall declare that it was null and void from the beginning.* In fine, in taking the oath, a Catholic must reason in this manner. It is an article of my faith, that the church is infallible, the pillar of truth, says St. Paul, which the powers of hell can never overthrow, according to the promise of Christ. Now should the church *declare*, that this oath is null and void from the beginning, I bind myself by oath not to believe her. Is this consistent with the principles of a Catholic? To believe that the church is an infallible guide, and to bind himself by a solemn oath not to believe her although she should define contrary to his opinion!"

Answer. A Catholic should sooner expire on the wheel, than take an oath implying an abjuration of any point of his religion. We have not here a permanent city, and in suffering with uprightness and integrity for conscience
fake,

fake, we expect a better. We know that life is short, that the Christian is condemned to the cross, and that the pampered tyrant, as well as the oppressed slave, must appear naked at the awful tribunal of Jesus Christ.

We are not to court the favours of government at the expence of conscience neither does the oath impose such a rigorous condition.

The words, “without thinking that I am or
“can be acquitted of this declaration, although
“the pope, or any authority whatsoever, shall
“declare that it was null and void from the
“beginning”—these words, I say, mean no more than that you are convinced of the truth of what you swear; and that, in case of a dispensation you think yourself still bound to keep your oath. For the words, “acquitted, “absolved,” regard the dispensing power. Now that the doctrines mentioned in the declaration, are not our real principles, has been sufficiently proved; and reason, as well as religion, informs us, that a dispensation granted against the law of God, or good morals, “cannot acquit or absolve us before God and man.” “It is not a faithful dispensation,” says St. Bernard, “but a cruel dissipation.” “Non fidelis dispensatio, sed crudelis dissipatio.”*

* De Dispensatione et Præcepto.

Ninthly :

Ninthly : “ Let us suppose that the church
 “ *shall declare the oath null and void from the be-*
 “ *ginning*, you bind yourself by oath not to
 “ believe her ; and thus renounce your religion
 “ under cover of loyalty.”

Answer. I do not bind myself by oath not to believe the church in her doctrinal decisions : I only swear that “ I do not think myself acquitted or absolved ” of my obligations, by a dispensation granted by the pope, &c. The last paragraph, as I remarked before, is entirely levelled against the dispensing power.

Our legislators know, that the infallibility of the church is a tenet of Roman Catholics. By the very preamble of the act, they enable us to give public assurances of our allegiance, without prejudice to our real principles. In swearing that “ I do not think myself acquitted of this
 “ declaration, although the pope or any au-
 “ thority whatsoever, shall declare that it was
 “ null and void from the beginning,” I do not mean to deny the infallibility of the church, nor the authority of God, nor even the supreme authority of the state : and the magistrate, in whose presence I swear, knows that it is not my intention. As there is no design on one part, nor deception on the other, I neither renounce my faith, nor perjure myself, although
 the

the severity of the letter seems to import one, or the other, or both. Oaths and laws are liable to interpretations; and one general rule prevails all over the world, viz. "That a greater stress is to be laid on the sense, than on the words." "It is not to be doubted," says the emperor Justinian, "but that he acts contrary to the law, who, confining himself to the letter, acts contrary to the spirit and intent of it: and whoever, to excuse himself, endeavours fraudulently to elude the true sense of a law, by a rigorous attachment to the words of it, shall not escape its penalties by such prevarication." "Non dubium est in lege committere eum, qui verba legis amplexus, contra legis nititur voluntatem: nec pœnas insertas legibus evitabit, qui se contra juris sententiam sæva prærogativa verborum fraudulenter excusat."

"Whoever swears, must do it according to the intention of him to whom he swears, let the mode and form of the expressions be what they will," says St. Isidorus. "Quacumque arte verborum quisque juret, Deus tamen, qui conscientiae testis est, ita hoc accipit, sicut ille, cui juratur, intelligit." * Far from renouncing the infallibility of the church, which is neither the purport of the oath, nor the

* Isidorus apud Gratianum, 22. 9. 5. c. 9.

the design of a Catholic who takes it, I am convinced that the unerring spirit that guides her, will never permit her to define as an article of faith, any proposition rejected in the test, or sanctify any doctrine against the institution of Christ.

Faith is founded on revelation: and the church can never make a new article of faith. She can only declare what has been revealed, to prevent the chaff of human opinions from mixing with the pure grain of the evangelical doctrine.

Supposing that faith is founded on revelation, and that, as the bishop of Meaux remarks, after Christ there is no new revelation, for in him is the plentitude,—the Catholics rest secure that it is out of the church's power, to declare that their oath is null and void: as it is out of her power to declare, that fraud, murder, and perjury are lawful. This shall appear by analyzing the oath,

First: "Has God revealed that I am not to
"bear true allegiance to George III. or to re-
"nounce any allegiance to the pretender? If
"he has revealed it, pope Clement XIII. died
"an heretic: he banished an Irish superior for
"complimenting the pretender with the title of
"*King of Great-Britain.*"

Secondly:

Secondly : “ Has God revealed, that I can
 “ lawfully and *piously* murder my fellow-crea-
 “ ture, and break a just promise, or refuse pay-
 “ ing what I owe him, because he is of a differ-
 “ ent religion ? ”

Thirdly : “ Has God revealed that I am *to be-*
 “ *lieve* that popes and foreign princes ought to
 “ have any civil authority within this realm ? ”

Fourthly : “ Has God revealed, that kings can
 “ be deposed and murdered by their subjects,
 “ because they are excommunicated by the
 “ pope and council ? ”

There is the whole substance of the oath :
 and as God has not revealed any of those as-
 sertions, but commanded the reverse, the
 church can never declare them as articles of
 faith. Did St. Paul mean to renounce the *au-*
thority of Heaven, when he said, “ Should an
 “ angel from Heaven preach another doctrine,
 “ *do not* believe him ? ” Does a Catholic re-
 “ nounce *the authority* of the church, in not
 thinking that she can allow perjury ? But if
 such be the case, you will ask me, “ why some
 “ people have written against this oath ? ” or,
 “ why the small number of Catholics have not
 “ united with the great number who have
 “ taken it ? ”

M

I can

I can assure you, sir, that the Catholics who have not taken the oath, look on the deposing power as a dream; the murder of heretics as an impious slander, calculated in times of turbulence, to *murder* the character of the innocent, and only adapted to those distant æras, when “Papists attempted to blow up a river, with gun-powder, in order to drown a city.”* In fine, they are ready to swear allegiance to George the third, and renounce any allegiance to the Stuarts.

But the chief exception to the oath is—the manner in which it is worded. It must be taken in “the plain and ordinary sense of the words.” This cannot be reconciled with “authority whatsoever.” A Catholic *abjures* upon oath a doctrine he never believed. *Abjuration* implies the belief of a previous error. “Foreign princes ought not have,” &c. How can subjects know? or what is it to them? “Without any dispensation already granted.” You suppose then that we have a dispensation to perjure ourselves; consequently it is nugatory to swear, when you are enabled not believe us. It is too dangerous to sport with the awful name of the Divinity: and if a free-thinker revered the Supreme Being, his conscience would be *screwed* in taking an oath which

* Walker, p. 349. Hume, Hist. of England, Vol. I.

which minces a syllable, and requires a long commentary. Further: Every invader, every usurper, would avail himself of a similar oath. In Ireland, he would find it framed to his hand, and make us swear "that George the third ought to have no authority within this realm," though the lawful king would be at the same time asserting his right in England. The alternative would be—death or perjury.

Such are the exceptions of the few who have not taken the oath: exceptions not to be disregarded by those, with whom they may have any weight. For an oath is dreadful in itself: and we can never act against the dictates of an erroneous conscience, till our scruples are removed. "*Quod non est ex fide, peccatum est.*"

Here below "we see in a glass darkly," says St. Paul. Providence has thrown a sable veil over the human intellect. The scripture itself, this law of spirit and life, proposed as a rule to the learned and ignorant, is become the subject of disputes and controversies. All legal acts are liable to inconveniencies. It is impossible for the legislators who devise them, to read in the minds of other men, the doubts which may arise concerning the sense and force of some expres-

sions. Hence, new acts to explain and amend former laws.

Should the wisdom of the legislative powers deign to reduce the oath to a few plain words, whereby we should swear allegiance to his majesty,—renounce any to the Stuarts,—swear never to maintain nor abet any doctrine inconsistent with the rights of sovereigns, the security of our fellow-subjects, nor ever to accept of any dispensation to the contrary,—all the ends of government would be fully answered, and the few scrupulous Catholics, who cavil about words, would join the great numbers who have proceeded upon more enlarged and liberal principles.

Should our neighbours doubt the delicacy of our consciences, when we swear, we have no argument to convince them, but the following.

We groan under the yoke of misery and oppression, throughout the long and trying periods of six successive reigns. We suffer for crimes we have never committed. The punishment, which according to all laws should finish with the delinquent, is entailed on the innocent posterity to the fourth and fifth generation, by a rigorous severity, similar to that of those Tuscan princes, who used to fasten living men to dead bodies.

bodies. The laws which in other countries are the resource and protection of the errant pilgrim, are here the mortal enemies of the settled natives. These abortives of the Stuart race reign uncontrouled a long time after the death of their inauspicious progenitors. On every part they spread penal bitterneſſes, with an unwearied hand; deal out transportation to the clergy; poverty and diſtreſs to the laity. They continually hang as ſo many ſwords, over our heads. The lenity of the magiſtrates, with the humanity of our Proteſtant neighbours, are the only clouds that intercept the ſcorching influence of thoſe blazing comets, kindled in times of turbulence and confuſion. Were it a principle of our religion to pay no regard to the dictates of conſcience,—were our paſtors and clergy ſuch as they are deſcribed, “ people who diſpenſe with “ every law of God and man, who ſanctify rebellion and murder, and even change the very “ nature and eſſential differences of vice and “ virtue.” * Were we people of this kind, the penal reſtraints would be ſoon removed. One verbal recantation of Popery, backed with a falſe oath, would diſſolve our chains. In three weeks you would ſee all the Catholics at church, and their clergy along with them. Licensed guilt would

* Leland, b. 5. ch. 3.

would soon kick in wantonness, where starving innocence shivers without a covering. A remedy neglected from motives of conscience, is a proof of the patient's integrity. Our sufferings and perseverance plead aloud in favour of our abhorrence and detestation of perjury : and though our Protestant neighbours, may laugh at the seeming errors of our minds, yet they will do justice to the integrity of our hearts.

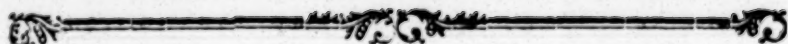
Now, as in the primitive ages of the church, it is our principle and duty to pray for our kings, " that God would be pleased to grant them a
" long life, and a quiet reign ; that their family
" may be safe, and their forces valiant ; their
" senate lawful, their people orderly and virtuous ; that they may rule in peace, and have
" all the blessings they can desire, either as men
" or princes." *

I have the honour to remain,

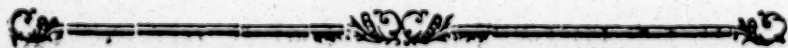
Sir, your most humble,

and obedient Servant,

ARTHUR O'LEARY.



A N
A D D R E S S
T O T H E
C O M M O N P E O P L E
O F T H E
R O M A N C A T H O L I C R E L I G I O N ,
C O N C E R N I N G T H E A P P R E H E N D E D
F R E N C H I N V A S I O N .



A N

A D D R E S S , &c.

Brethren, Countrymen, and Fellow-Citizens,

RELIGION has always considered war as one of the scourges of Heaven, and the source of numberless scourges and crimes. Men may arm their hands in defence of life and property ; but their hearts shudder at the thoughts of a field of battle which can scarce afford graves to the armies that dispute it, covered with the mangled bodies and scattered limbs of thousands of Christians, who never saw nor provoked each other before ; and whose only fault was obedience to their princes ! which obedience cannot be imputed to the soldier as a crime. The peaceful cottage deserted at the sight of an approaching enemy ! Famine and
distress

distress closing the scene, and filling up the measure of calamities! Such are the misfortunes inseparable from war,—misfortunes which induced the great St. Paul to exhort the Christians in the following manner: “I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions be made for all men, for kings, and all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.”* And such should be the constant prayer of a Christian.

But what, my brethren, if the enemy's sword glittered in our streets, and that to the licentiousness of a foreign foe we added domestic dissensions! If the sound of the enemy's trumpet would be drowned in the cries and shrieks of the injured neighbour whom we ourselves would be the first to oppress! Would not war itself lose its terrors, when compared to such outrages? And the calamities we would bring on ourselves, would not they surpass those which would pour in upon us from foreign nations? Such, nevertheless, are the fears that haunt us. Both Protestants and Catholics declare, that in case of an invasion, the common people are the greatest cause of their alarms; not from dread of your superior power, but from the sad necessity they would be under, of punishing those whom

* 1 Tim. chap. ii.

whom they are willing to protect, and the general confusion that would disturb the peace and tranquillity of the rich, and draw down inevitable destruction on the poor. For in such an unfortunate juncture, every Catholic possessed of a feather bed, and commodious habitation, would join his protestant neighbour in their mutual defence. The aggregate body of them would not be a match for regular forces, yet they would be an over-match for *you*. They would unite in one common cause; you would be divided amongst yourselves, exposed to each other's encroachments, and overpowered by all parties.

Such, my brethren, would be your situation, should you be unhappy enough to strike from the path of a peaceable and Christian conduct. Forbid it Heaven, that it should be ever your case! I conceive better hopes of you. Your unshaken loyalty under the most trying circumstances—the calm and quietness that reigned in your peaceful huts scattered up and down the extensive counties of Cork and Kerry, where the Catholics are poor and numerous, whilst other parts of the kingdom were infested with *Houghbers, White Boys, Hearts of Oak and Steel*, and alarmed at the continual sight of judges, chains and gibbets—the quiet and peaceable manner in which you behaved on a late occasion,

sion, when you imagined the enemy at your doors; all these circumstances are pledges of your loyalty and good conduct, and happy omens of your steady perseverance in the same line.

Your bishops and clergy have enforced the doctrine of peace, subordination, and loyalty from the sacred altars, where the least lie would be a sacrilege, and crime of the first magnitude. The Catholic gentlemen have set forth the example to you. Both have bound themselves to king and government, by the most sacred ties. They have souls to be saved, and would be sorry to lose them by wilful perjury: they who would be on a level with their Protestant neighbours, if they took but the qualification-oath against the conviction of their consciences.

But the doctrine and example of the learned, prudent, and better sort of your profession, should be the only rule of your conduct: for in all countries, the generality of the common people are ill qualified to judge or determine for themselves. They are easily governed by the senses; hurried by their passions; and misled by a wild and extravagant fancy that intrudes itself into the province of Reason.

Far be it from me to suspect you for any design to avail yourselves of the calamities of your nation,

nation, or to commit, in time of war, a robbery which you would detest in time of peace. Is the crime less heinous, because it is committed against a neighbour, who is doubly miserable from the terrors of a foreign foe, and the outrageous assaults of a treacherous fellow-subject?

When the soldiers asked St. John the Baptist, what they should do? He desired them, “to do violence to no man; not to accuse any one falsely; and to be content with their wages.”* Hence all divines are agreed, that the empire of justice is so extensive, that war itself must acknowledge its authority. Kings, in declaring war, make a solemn appeal to the tribunal of Heaven, for the justice of their cause. The soldier cannot, in consequence, plunder or oppress the merchant or husbandman in his enemy’s country: he must strictly abide by the orders of his commander. If justice, then, in certain circumstances, must sheath the enemy’s sword, how much more forcibly must it not restrain the citizen’s hand from invading what he cannot enjoy without guilt here, and punishment hereafter?—A punishment the more to be dreaded, as perhaps there would be no time for restitution and repentance!—Indispensable obligations, to which every robber is liable, and without which he has no mercy to expect. But if a robbery committed on a private man, deserve

* St. Luke, chap. viii.

serve death and damnation, what must not be the guilt of those who would flock to the enemy's standard, to the total overthrow and destruction of an entire kingdom? It would be vain to plead the hardships you suffer; the prospect of being reinstated in the lands of which your ancestors have been deprived in times of general confusion; a more free and unlimited exercise of your religion; in fine, the last argument of a desperate man, "If they come, I have nothing to lose." Those reasons I have not heard from yourselves: I have read them with surprise in speeches and essays against the repeal of the penal laws; and I hope in God, that your conduct shall for ever contradict them.

When an enemy lands in a country, every person has something to lose. The labourer who refreshes his weary limbs with balmy sleep, and for whose soft slumbers the gouty rich man would exchange his bed of down, would lose his rest from continual fears and apprehensions. When public works would be discontinued, and tradesmen dismissed by their employers, carpenters, masons, slaters, &c. would lose their hire. It would not be with a view to feed an hungry Irishman, that a number of French dragoons would make excursions from their camp: it would be with a design to carry off

off his calf or pig, and to kill himself if he resisted. Whatever distinction the laws of this unhappy kingdom may make between Protestant and Papist, a conqueror's sword makes none. War levels and confounds all religions, where their professors are subjects of a monarch whose kingdom is invaded.

When the French joined the Americans, it was not from love for the Presbyterian religion. If they landed here, it would not be with a design to promote the Catholic cause. When Oliver Cromwell beheaded Charles the first, brother-in-law to the king of France, and issued a bloody decree, whereby all the English Catholics were commanded to quit the kingdom in the space of two months, the French, far from resenting the injury offered to the blood-royal and to the Catholic religion, sided Cromwell against Spain : and ordered the dutches of Savoy to promote and protect her Protestant subjects, whilst the English Catholics were smarting under the scourge of persecution, and threatened with total extermination.*

Thus all religions are alike to a political people, whose only aim is interest and conquest. Hence, in France, Protestants of all denominations are promoted in the army. Protestant generals command her forces. The order of Military

* Leti's Life of Cromwell.

tary Merit is instituted for Protestant officers. It is equal to them whether a soldier prays or curses,—whether he handles a bead or a prayer book,—provided he can manage a sword and a gun. And if thirty thousand men, under the denomination of French troops, landed in Ireland, fifteen thousand Protestants, from France, Germany, Switzerland, &c. would make up half the number.

Neither are you to confide in their promise of protection. The most part of yourselves can remember, that in the war of seventeen hundred and forty-five, they prevailed on the Pretender to invade Scotland. This adventurer, after suffering more hardships than any romantic hero we read of, no sooner returned from this chimerical expedition to Paris, than, at the solicitation of the English ambassador, he was forced to leave the kingdom of France. He died, about two months since, without issue,* and by his death has rid the kingdom of all fears arising from the pretensions of a family that commenced our destruction, and completed our ruin. Of this I think fit to inform you, as, in all likelihood, if the French landed here, some might give out, that he was in their camp, in order to deceive you by an imposture that
would

* Two months before the author wrote this address, the Pretender's death was announced in the papers.

would end in your destruction. For all those who would join the French, would be strung up after the war, and give occasion of charging the whole body of the Roman Catholics with the treachery of some of its rotten members. Or what protection could you expect from people who would sacrifice the ties of kindred and friendship for the good of their state?

Expect then nothing from the French on the score of religion, but remain peaceably in your cottages. Mind your business as usual, and be free from all groundless apprehensions. Work for those who employ you: for it is against the laws of war to molest or hurt any but such as oppose the enemy, sword in hand: and the world must allow that the French are not strangers to the laws of war, or the rules of military discipline. The soldier himself in the rage of slaughter, feels the impulse of humanity. He is bound to spare the suppliant who cries out for quarter, and to protect the town or city that surrenders for want of power to resist. Secure your lives, which run the risk of being lost by the sword in fighting for the foe, or by the rope if you chanced to escape the danger of the field: but above all, save your souls, which would be lost without resource: for among the crimes that exclude from the kingdom of Heaven, St. Paul reckons "sedition:" and what

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greater

greater sedition than to rise up against your king and country, and to defile your hands with the blood of your fellow-subjects.

Should the king and parliament adopt the policy of France, that rewards the soldier's valour, and leaves his religion to God,—should they enter on the liberal plan of the Protestant powers of the continent, who level the fences, and make no distinction between religious parties,—should the Catholic gentry, descended in a long line from warlike chieftains, and animated with the same courage and magnanimity that crowned with laurels their relations and namesakes on the banks of the Rhine, the walls of Cremona, in the fields of Germany, and the plains of Fontenoy; where hands disqualified from using a gun in defence of their native country, have conquered cities and provinces for foreign kings,—should the Catholic gentry, I say be empowered by parliament to join their Protestant neighbours, and press to the standard of their country, at the head of a spirited and active race of men, preserved by labour from the weakness of indolence, enured by habit to the rigours of manly exercise, and, like the Spartan youth, already half disciplined from the very nature of their sports and diversions,—then join the banners of your country: fight in support of the common cause. If
you

you die, you die with honour and a pure conscience. The death of a plunderer and rebel is infamy and reprobation.

I repeat it—you have nothing to expect from the French. Ireland they will never keep; or if they kept it, is it a reason that you should forfeit soul and conscience by plunder, treachery, and rebellion? St. Paul lays it down for a rule, that “the damnation of those is just “who do evil that good may come.”* What must not be the damnation of those who do evil for the sake of mischief? And Christ declares, that “it availeth a man nothing, if he gain the “whole world and lose his soul.”

But by the coming of the French, your gain would fall short of your expectations, if any amongst you would be mad enough to entertain any expectations of the kind. When the French take a Roman Catholic captain, do they ever return him back his ship or restore him his liberty, in compliment to his religion? Are we to expect more from them by land, than by sea? If then in compliment to the Catholic religion, they would not return a fishing-boat to our distressed families, who would imagine they would give us all the estates in the kingdom? Or is it because these estates belonged in remote times to our ancestors, that we could in conscience

N 2

dispossess

* Romans, chap. iii.

dispossess the present owners, were it even in our power? The remains of old castles, formerly the seats of hospitality,—and the territories which still bear our names,—may remind us of our origin, and inspire us with spirited sentiments, to which the lower class of people in other countries are entire strangers, and which a wise government could improve to the advantage of the state. Yet these memorials of ancient grandeur and family-importance, entitle us to no other pretensions than that of scorning to do any thing base, vile, or treacherous.

We must imitate that descendant of the Sidonian kings, who, from extreme poverty, worked in a garden : being asked by Alexander the Great, “How he supported poverty?” “Better,” replied he, “than I could support grandeur. My hands supply my wants : and “I want nothing, when I desire nothing.” Pity, my brethren, that this man was not a Christian ! Or pity, that the Christians do not resemble this Heathen ! The most flourishing empires have fallen with time : the world is in a continual change : and the Roman Catholics must share the same fate with the rest of mankind.

There is no reviving old claims in this or any other country. Or perhaps, if we revived them, they could not stand the test of severe justice.

Our

Our ancestors have they ever encroached on their neighbours? On their first landing in this kingdom, have not they taken these estates from the Carthaginians, Firbolgs, and others who were settled here before them? If then the Protestants, who are now in possession, gave them up, to whom would they give them? If they have no right to them, because they belonged to our ancestors,—our ancestors had no right to them, because they belonged to others. If a French general sounded a trumpet, and desired us to take our lands, would not there be a thousand pretenders to every estate? Would not every one be eager for the best spot? And would not this spot fall to the share of the strongest, who would kill or overpower the weakest? I am ashamed, my brethren, at your reading such trifles in this paper. I should never have mentioned them, had not I read such a nonsensical charge in the writings of some paltry scribblers, who, in order to keep our Protestant neighbours in perpetual dread of inoffensive fellow-subjects, do not blush at an insult offered to common sense, and to the rights of mankind.

For, where property is once settled,—secured by the laws of any realm,—and confirmed by a long possession,—there is no disturbing the proprietor. It is the general consent of nations, and the universal voice of mankind. By the
Roman

Roman laws, thirty years possession secures the possessor in the enjoyment of his property. Even in scripture we read, that, when a king of the Ammonites had challenged some lands which the Israelites had taken from his ancestors, Jephthah, the ruler of God's people, amongst other reasons, pleads a long possession : " While " Israel dwelt in Heshbon, why therefore did ye " not recover them within that time ? " * Thus, from the first establishment of civil society, a long possession annihilates all claims. And by the same principles, every Protestant gentleman in Ireland, has as good a right to his estate, as any Milesian had before him. For this I appeal to your consciences. As you are to appear before God, if you cut corn in the field of a Protestant, or stole his hay, would not your confessor compel you to restitution ? What right then should you have to the land, where you would scruple to take the growth of it ? Far then from giving you estates, the French could not, by the laws of war and the principles of conquest, universally agreed on by civilized nations, take a foot of ground from any person in the kingdom, for their own use ; much less for yours. If the nation should be unable to make head against them,—and that the chief men of the kingdom, and the representatives of the people, should prefer preservation to death, (as doubtless

* Judges, chap. ii.

less they will, if they have not superior forces to oppose them)—they neither will nor can require any more than the allegiance of the inhabitants, the same rates, taxes, and government-support, that were granted to the king of England. The natives will be secured in the free exercise of their religion, the full enjoyment of their property, their laws, and privileges. This is always done. The reverse would be an open violation of the laws of nations, which are binding on the very conquerors; and which, according to the present system, they strictly observe.

Thus, the common people are never interested in the change of government. They may change their masters: but they will not change their burden. The rich will be still rich. The poor will be poor. In France, they have poor of all trades and professions: it will be the same here. But you will tell me, “that at least you will have the free exercise of your religion.” Pray, my brethren, do not your Protestant neighbours grant you the free exercise of your religion? Would they not esteem you the more, in proportion as you would live up to its maxims? Even the worthy, learned, and charitable Dr. Mann, the Protestant bishop, at the head of an assembly of his clergy, recommended benevolence and moderation towards the Roman Catholics.

Catholics. The same doctrine has been preached not long ago from the Protestant pulpit. Thus, it is the glory of our days, to see the unhappy spirit of persecution dying away, and Christian charity succeeding the intemperate zeal and unchristian superstition which, for many years, had disgraced religion, and dishonoured humanity.

Bells, steeples, and churches richly ornamented, contribute to the outward pomp and solemnity of worship: but an upright heart and pure conscience are the temples in which the Divinity delights. We would fain worship God our own way. Doubtless. But are we to worship him against his will? In lighting up the sacred fire, are we to burn the house of God? Saul, king of Israel, intended to worship God, in offering up a sacrifice. The Lord rejected him, because he offered it up against the law. His intention was good; but the action criminal. Thus, the Lord would reject you, if, under pretence of a more free worship, you flocked to the standard of an enemy; rose up in rebellion against lawful authority; plundered your neighbour; and imbrued your hands in the blood of your fellow-subjects.

Let none then say, "We will have a Catholic king." Subjects are little concerned in
the

the religion of governors. Thousands of Catholics lose their souls in France and Italy, after leading a loose and dissolute life : thousands of them work their salvation in the Protestant states of Holland and Germany. It is then equal to man, what religion his neighbour or king be of, provided his own conscience be pure, and his life upright.

The Prussian, Dutch, and Hanoverian Catholics live under Protestant governments, and join their sovereigns against Catholic powers. Their religion is the same with yours. And this religion enforces obedience to the king and magistrates under whom we live. Christ commanded tribute to be paid to an heathen prince, and acknowledged the temporal power of an heathen magistrate, who pronounced sentence of death against him,

Nero, sovereign of the world, rips open his mother's womb, and begins the first bloody persecution against the Christians : seventeen thousand of whom were slaughtered in one month ; and their bodies, daubed over with pitch and tar, hung up to give light to the city. St. Paul, dreading that such horrid usage would force them to overturn the state, and join the enemies of the empire, writes to them in the following manner : " Let every man be subject to
" the

“the higher powers: and they that resist receive unto themselves damnation.” * A strong conviction then that, in obeying our rulers, we obey God, (who leaves no virtue unrewarded, as he leaves no vice unpunished) sweetens the thoughts of subjection: and, under the hardest master, obedience is no longer a hardship to the true Christian.

So great was the impression made by this doctrine on the minds of the primitive Christians,—so great was their love for public order,—that, although they filled the whole empire and all the armies, they never once flew out into any disorder. Under all the cruelties that the rage of persecutors could invent,—amidst so many seditions and civil wars,—amidst so many conspiracies against the persons of emperors,—not a seditious Christian could be found.

We have the same motives to animate our conduct; the same incentives to piety, *godliness*, and *honesty*; the same expectations that raise us above all earthly things, and put us beyond the reach of mortality. “For, here on earth,” says St. Paul, “we have not a lasting city, but expect a better.” Let not public calamities, bloody wars, the scourges of Heaven, and the judgments

* Rom. chap. xiii.

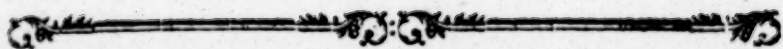
udgments of God, be incentives to vice, plunder, rebellion, and murder; but rather the occasions of the reformation of our morals, and spurs to repentance. Let religion, which by patience has triumphed over the Cæsars, and displayed the cross in the banners of kings without sowing disorders in their realms, support itself without the accursed aid of insurrections and crimes. Far from expecting to enrich ourselves at the expence of justice, and under the fatal shelter of clouds of confusion and troubles, let us seriously reflect, that death will soon level the poor and rich in the dust of the grave; that we are all to appear naked before the awful tribunal of Jesus Christ, to account for our actions; and that it is by millions of times more preferable to partake of the happiness of Lazarus, who was conveyed to Abraham's bosom, after a life of holiness and poverty, than to be rich and wicked, and to share the fate of that unhappy man who, dressed in purple, and after a life of ease and opulence, was refused a drop of water to allay his burning thirst. In expectation that you will comply with the instructions of your bishop and clergy, not only from dread of the laws, but moreover from the love and fear of God,

I remain, my dear brethren,

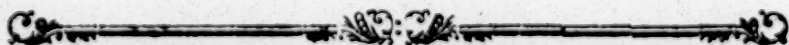
Your affectionate servant,

Cork, Aug. 14,
1779.

ARTHUR O'LEARY.



THE
REV. JOHN WESLEY'S
LETTER,
CONCERNING
THE CIVIL PRINCIPLES
OF
ROMAN CATHOLICS.
ALSO,
A DEFENCE OF THE
PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION.



L E T T E R

FROM THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.

TO THE PRINTER.

S I R,

SOME time ago, a pamphlet was sent me, entitled, "An appeal from the Protestant Association to the people of Great Britain." A day or two since, a kind of answer to this, was put into my hand, which pronounces, "Its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, and its object malicious." On the contrary, I think the style of it is clear, easy, and natural; the reasoning, in general, strong and conclusive; the object, or design, kind and benevolent. And, in pursuance of the same kind and benevolent design, namely, to preserve our happy constitution, I shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that tract, by a few plain arguments.

With

With persecution I have nothing to do : I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let there be “ as boundless a freedom in religion,” as any man can conceive : but this does not touch the point. I will set religion, true or false, utterly out of the question : suppose the Bible, if you please, to be a fable ; and the Koran to be the word of God. I consider not, whether the Romish religion be true or false : I build nothing on one or the other supposition : therefore, away with all your common-place declamations about intolerance and persecution for religion ! Suppose every word of pope Pius’s creed to be true,—suppose the council of Trent to have been infallible,—yet, I insist upon it, That no government, not Roman catholic, ought to tolerate men of the Roman catholic persuasion.

I prove this by a plain argument : let him answer it that can :—

That no Roman catholic does or can give security for his allegiance or peaceable behaviour, I prove thus : It is a Roman catholic maxim, established, not by private men, but by a public council, that, “ No faith is to be “ kept with heretics.” This has been openly avowed by the council of Constance : but it never was openly disclaimed. Whether private persons avow or disavow it, it is a fixed maxim

maxim of the church of Rome : but as long as it is so, nothing can be more plain, than that the members of that church can give no reasonable security to any government of their allegiance or peaceable behaviour : therefore, they ought not to be tolerated by any government, Protestant, Mahometan, or Pagan.

You may say, "Nay, but you will take an oath of allegiance." True, five hundred oaths : but the maxim, "No faith is to be kept with heretics," sweeps them all away, as a spider's web : so that still, no governors, that are not Roman catholics, can have any security of their allegiance.

Again, those who acknowledge the spiritual power of the pope, can give no security of their allegiance to any government : but all Roman catholics acknowledge this ; therefore, they can give no security for their allegiance.

The power of granting pardons for all sins, past, present, and to come, is, and has been, for many centuries, one branch of his spiritual power ; but those who acknowledge him to have this spiritual power, can give no security for their allegiance ; since they believe the pope can pardon rebellions, high treasons, and all other sins whatsoever.

The power of dispensing with any promise, oath, or vow, is another branch of the spiritual power of the pope ; and all who acknowledge his spiritual power, must acknowledge this : but whoever acknowledges the dispensing power of the pope, can give no security of his allegiance to any government.

Oaths and promises are none : they are light as air : a dispensation makes them all null and void.

Nay, not only the pope, but even a priest, has power to pardon sins ! this is an essential doctrine of the church of Rome : but they that acknowledge this, cannot possibly give any security for their allegiance to any government. Oaths are no security at all ; for the priest can pardon both perjury and high treason.

Setting, then, religion aside, it is plain, that upon principles of reason, no government ought to tolerate men, who cannot give any security to that government for their allegiance and peaceable behaviour : but this no Romanist can do, not only while he holds, that “ No
“ faith is to be kept with heretics,” but so long as he acknowledges either priestly absolution, or the spiritual power of the pope.

“ But

"But the late act," you say, "does not either tolerate or encourage Roman Catholics." I appeal to matter of fact. Do not the Romanists themselves understand it as a toleration? You know they do. And does it not already, let alone what it may do by-and-by, encourage them to preach openly, to build chapels, at Bath and elsewhere, to raise seminaries, and to make numerous converts, day by day, to their intolerant, persecuting principles? I can point out, if need be, several of the persons: and they are increasing daily.

But "Nothing dangerous to English liberty" "is to be apprehended from them." I am not certain of that. Some time since a Romish priest came to one I knew, and after talking with her largely, broke out, "You are no heretic! You have the experience of a real Christian!" "And would you," she asked, "burn me alive?" He said, "God forbid! Unless it were for the good of the church."

Now what security could she have for her life, if it had depended on that man? The good of the church would have burst all the ties of truth, justice and mercy; especially, when seconded by the absolution of a priest, or, if need were, a papal pardon.

If any one please to answer this, and to set his name, I shall probably reply : but the productions of anonymous writers I do not promise to take any notice of.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

CITY ROAD,
JANUARY 12, 1780.

JOHN WESLEY.

A
D E F E N C E

O F T H E

PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION.

B Y J. W.

VARIOUS pieces, under different signatures, having appeared in the public prints, casting unjust reflections on the Protestant Association, and tending to quiet the minds of the Protestants at the present alarming crisis, by insinuating that there is no danger arising from the toleration of Popery, and that such associations are unnecessary; I think it a piece of justice, which I owe to my countrymen, to give them a plain and true account of the views of this assembly, and lay before them the reasons which induced them to form this Association, and determined them to continue it.

Whether the gentlemen, who have favoured the public with their remarks on this occasion,
are

are really Protestants, or Protestant Dissenters, as they style themselves; or whether they are Papists in disguise, who assume the name of Protestants, that they may be able to undermine the Protestant cause with the greater success, is neither easy nor necessary to determine; but it is easy to see that they are either totally ignorant of the subject on which they write, or else they wilfully disguise it.

The pieces I refer to are written with different degrees of temper. One gentleman in particular appears to be very angry, and loads the Association, and their friends, with the most illiberal and unmanly abuse. If this gentleman had clearly stated the cause of his resentment, he might have been answered; but as he appears to be angry at he knows not what, he can only be pitied. Others have written with more candour and moderation, and would have been worthy regard, had they not been deficient in point of argument. If these are sincerely desirous of being informed, they are requested to attend to the following particulars.

However unconcerned the present generation may be, and unapprehensive of danger from the amazing growth of Popery; how calmly soever they may behold the erection of Popish chapels, hear of Popish schools being opened,

opened, and see Popish books publicly advertised, they are to be informed that our ancestors, whose wisdom and firmness have transmitted to us those religious and civil liberties which we now enjoy, had very different conceptions of this matter; and had they acted with that coldness, indifference, and stupidity, which seems to have seized the present age, we had now been sunk into the most abject state of misery and slavery, under an arbitrary prince and Popish government.

It was the opinion of our brave, wise, circumspect, and cautious ancestors, that an open toleration of the Popish religion is inconsistent with the safety of a free people, and a Protestant Government. It was thought by them that every convert to Popery, was by principle an enemy to the constitution of this country; and as it was supposed that the Roman Catholic religion promoted rebellion against the state, there was a very severe law made to prevent the propagation of it. Such was the state of things in the reign of the great Elizabeth; and Popery having, notwithstanding such restriction, gained ground in the reign of James the second, though the encouragement it then received from the state, was not equal to what it has now obtained,

tained, the nation was alarmed; and the noble and resolute stand which the Protestants then made against the advances of Popery, produced the Revolution.

In the reign of William the Third, the state was thought to be in danger from the encroachments of Rome; to prevent which, the act of parliament was made, which is now, in the most material parts, repealed, and several Protestants being of opinion, that this repeal will, in its consequences, act as an open toleration of the Popish religion, they are filled with the most painful apprehensions: they think, that liberty, which they value more than their lives, and which they would piously transmit to their children, to be in danger: they are full of the most alarming fears, that chains are forging at the anvil of Rome for the rising generation: they fear, that the Papists are undermining our happy constitution: they see the purple power of Rome advancing, by hasty strides, to overspread this once happy nation: they shudder at the thought of darkness and ignorance, misery and slavery, spreading their fable wings over this highly favoured isle: their souls are pained for their rights and liberties as men; and their hearts tremble for the ark of God.

Inspired

Inspired with such sentiments, and under the influence of such reasonable and well grounded fears, they think it a duty which they owe to themselves, their posterity, their religion, and their God, to unite as one man, and take every possible, loyal, and constitutional measure, to stop the progress of that soul-deceiving and all-enslaving superstition which threatens to overspread this land. It is to be hoped, that an attempt, so just and reasonable, will be crowned with success; but should it fail, through the supineness or groundless prejudices of those who ought to stand first in this cause, the members of this Association will enjoy the satisfaction of a self-approving mind, conscious of having done its duty; while those who meanly desert the Protestant cause, and tamely suffer the encroachments of Rome, may see their error when it is too late, and be filled with bitterness and remorse at a conduct so mean and despicable, and so unworthy their profession.

Whatever such persons may think of themselves and their conduct, and however they may dress themselves up in the splendid robes of candour and moderation, they are to be informed that their conduct is highly criminal, and may be attended with the most deplorable consequences; as, by their neglecting

glecting to appear on this great occasion, they give our rulers reason to conclude, that it is the sense of the nation that Popery should be tolerated.

It is sincerely to be lamented that Protestants in general, are not more apprehensive of the danger. Have they forgot the reign of bloody queen Mary? Have they forgot the fires in Smithfield, and can they behold the place without emotion where their fathers died? Will it ever be believed in future times, that persons of eminent and distinguished rank among the Protestants, and persons of high and exalted religious characters, refused to petition against Popery; and let it overspread our nation without opposition? Will it be believed that Englishmen were so far degenerated from the noble spirit of their ancestors, as tamely to bow the neck to the yoke of Rome? "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice; lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

It is not to be wondered at that the Papists, either openly or in disguise, take every method to prevent the just and reasonable view of the Protestant association, and therefore represent them as factious, seditious, and enemies

mies to toleration. These charges, and every other which the malice of our enemies, or the groundless fears and prejudices of our mistaken friends shall hereafter exhibit, will be separately and distinctly considered in the course of these letters; and such an account given of the views of the Protestant Association, and the line of conduct which they have pursued, and intend to pursue, in order to accomplish the great end for which they associate, as will, I hope, obviate every objection, remove every scruple, and excite the Protestants to join hand in hand, and unite as one man, in that cause, in which their present and future welfare is so nearly concerned, by

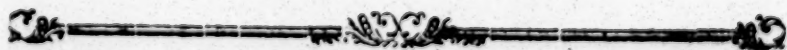
J. W.



REMARKS

ON THE FOREGOING

LETTER AND DEFENCE.



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R E M A R K S

ON THE FOREGOING

LETTER AND DEFENCE.

Addressed to the CONDUCTORS of the FREE-PRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

I KNOW that it is loss of time, and a loss to the public,—impatient for a paper in which they ~~first~~ first discovered the outlines of their country's rights, and from whence they daily expect new illustrations, on the most important subjects,—to take up the Freeman's Journal with idle controversy. Were controversy alone the subject, I should be the last to enter the list.

In your paper, which has already made its way to the continent, on account of the late exertions of the Irish, and which should contain nothing unworthy the nervous eloquence and liberal principles of your numerous and learned
corre-

correspondents, Mr. Wesley, in a syllogistical method, and the jargon of the schools, has arraigned the Catholics all over the world, with their kings and subjects, their prelates and doctors, as liars, perjurers, patentees of guilt and perjury, authorized by their priests to violate the sacred rules of order and justice; and unworthy of being tolerated even by *Turks* and *Pagans**. Such a charge carries with it, its own confutation. But are there not prejudiced people still in the world? The nine skins of parchment, filled with the names of petitioners against the English Catholics, owe the variety of their signatures, to pulpit declamations and inflammatory pamphlets, teeming with Mr. Wesley's false assertions: and, to the disgrace of the peerage, in this variety of signatures, is not the lord's hand-writing stretched near the scratch of the cobbler's awl? For the parchment would be profaned, if the man who does not know how to write, made the sign of the +.

I am a member of that communion which Mr. Wesley aspersed in so cruel a manner. I disclaimed upon oath, in presence of judge Henn, the creed which Mr. Wesley attributes to me. I have been the first to unravel the intricacies of that very oath of allegiance
proposed

* See Mr. Wesley's letter, page 193.

proposed to the Roman Catholics: as it is worded in a manner which, at first sight, seems abstruse. And, far from believing it lawful to "violate faith with heretics," I solemnly swear, without *equivocation*, or the *danger of perjury*, that, in a Catholic country, where I was chaplain of war, I thought it a crime to engage the king of England's soldiers or sailors into the service of a Catholic monarch, against their Protestant sovereign. I resisted the solicitations, and ran the risk of incurring the displeasure of a minister of state, and losing my pension: and my conduct was approved by all the divines in a monastery to which I then belonged, who all unanimously declared, that, in conscience, I could not have behaved otherwise.

Mr. Wesley may consider me as a fictitious character: but should he follow his *precursor*, (I mean his letter, waisted to us over the British channel) and on his mission from Dublin to Bandon, make Cork his way,—doctor Berkely, parish minister, near Middleton,—captains Stanner, French, and others, who were prisoners of war, in the same place, and at the same time,—can fully satisfy him as to the reality of my existence, in the line already described; and that in the beard which I then wore, and which, like that of sir Thomas More, *never committed any treason*, I never con-

P

cealed

cealed either poison or dagger to destroy my Protestant neighbour; though it was long enough to set all Scotland in a blaze, and to deprive lord G*****G***** of his *senses*.

Should any of the Scotch missionaries attend Mr. Wesley into this kingdom, and bring with them any of the stumps of the fagots with which Henry the eighth, his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, and the learned James the first, roasted the heretics of their times in Smithfield, or some of the fagots with which the Scotch saints, of whose proceedings Mr. Wesley is become the apologist, have burnt the houses of their inoffensive Catholic neighbours, we will convert them to their proper use. In Ireland the revolution of the great Platonic year is almost completed. Things are re-instituted in their primitive order. And the fagot, which, without any mission from Christ, preached the gospel by orders of Catholic and Protestant kings, is confined to the kitchen. Thus, what formerly roasted the man at the stake, now helps to feed him. And nothing but the severity of winter, and the coldness of the climate in Scotland, could justify Mr. Wesley in urging the rabble to light it. This is a bad time to introduce it amongst us, when we begin to be formidable to our foes, and united amongst ourselves. And to the glory of Ireland be it said,

said, we never condemned but murderers and perpetrators of unnatural crimes to the fagot.

By a statute of Henry the sixth, every Englishman of the Pale* was bound to shave his upper lip, or clip his whiskers, in order to distinguish himself from an Irishman. By this mark of distinction, it seems that what Cam-
pion calls in his old English, *glib*, and what we call the beard, as well as the complexion and size of both people, were much the same. In my opinion it had tended more to their mutual interest, and the glory of that monarch's reign, not to go to the nicety of *splitting a hair*, but encourage the growth of their *fleeces*, and inspire them with such mutual love for each other, as to induce them to kiss one another's beards, as brothers salute each other at Constantinople, after a few days absence. I am likewise of opinion, that Mr. Wesley, who prefaces his letter with, "The interest of the Protestant religion," would reflect more honour on his ministry, in promoting the happiness of the people, by preaching love and union, than in widening the breach, and increasing their calamities by division. The English and Irish were at that time of the same religion; but, divided in their affections, were miserable.

P 2

Though

* See the statutes of that king, and lament the effects of divisions fomented by sovereigns.

Though divided in speculative opinions, if united in sentiment, we would be happy. The English settlers breathed the vital air in England, before they inhaled the soft breezes of our temperate climate. The present generation can say "Our fathers and grandfathers have been born, bred, and buried here: we are Irishmen, as the descendants of the Normans, who have been born in England, are Englishmen."

Thus, born in an island in which the ancients might have placed their Hesperian gardens and golden apples, the temperature of the climate, and quality of the soil, *inimical to poisonous insects*, have cleansed our veins from the *sour and acid* blood of the Scythians and Saxons. We begin to open our eyes, and to learn wisdom from the experience of ages: we are tender-hearted: we are good-natured: we have feelings: we shed tears on the urns of the dead; deplore the loss of hecatombs of victims slaughtered on the gloomy altars of religious bigotry; cry in seeing the ruins of cities over which fanaticism has displayed the funeral torch, and sincerely pity the blind zeal of our Scotch and English neighbours, whose constant character is to pity none, for erecting the banners of persecution, at a time when the inquisition is abolished in Spain and Milan, and the Protestant gentry

gentry are carested at Rome, and live unmolested in the luxuriant plains of France and Italy

The statute of Henry the sixth is now grown obsolete. The razor of calamity has shaved our lower and upper lips, and given us smooth faces. Our land is uncultivated, our country a desert. Our natives are forced into the service of foreign kings, storming towns, and in the very heat of slaughter, tempering Irish courage with Irish mercy*. All our misfortunes flow from long-reigning intolerance, and the storms which, gathering first in the Scotch and English atmosphere, never failed to burst over our heads.

We are too wise to quarrel about religion. The Roman Catholics sing their psalms in Latin with a few inflections of the voice. Our Protestant neighbours sing the same psalms in English on a larger scale of musical notes. We never quarrel with our honest and worthy neighbours, the Quakers, for not singing at all; nor shall we ever quarrel with Mr. Wesley for *raising his voice to Heaven*, and warbling forth his canticles on whatever tune he pleases, whether it be to the tune of *Guardian Angels*, or *Largolet*. We like *social harmony*, and in *civil* music hate *discordance*. Thus, when we go to the shambles

we

* Count Dillon and the Irish Brigade could not be prevailed on by D'Estaing to put the English garrison to the sword. "We will not kill our Countrymen," said they. Would it not be wiser to let these gallant men go to mass, and serve their own king?

we never enquire into the butcher's religion, but into the quality of his meat : we care not whether the ox was fed in the pope's territories, or on the mountains of Scotland, provided the joint be good : for though there be many *heresies* in old books, we discover neither *heresy* nor *superstition* in beef and claret. We divide them cheerfully with one another, and though of different religions, we sit over the bowl with as much cordiality as if we were at a *love-feast*.

The Protestant Associations of Scotland and England may pity us ; but we feel more comfort than if we were scorching one another with fire and fagot. Instead of singing " peace to " men of good will on earth," does Mr. Wesley intend to sound the fury Alecto's horn, or the war-shell of the Mexicans ? The Irish, who have no resource but in their union, does he mean to arm them against each other ? One massacre, to which the fanaticism of the Scotch and English regicides gave rise, is more than enough : Mr. Wesley should not sow the seeds of a second. When he felt the first-fruits and illapses of the spirit,—when his zeal, too extensive to be confined within the majestic temples of the church of England, or the edifying meeting-houses of the other Christians, prompted him to travel most parts of Europe and America, and to establish a religion and houses of worship of his own, what opposition

tion has he not met with from the civil magistrates! with what insults from the rabble! broken benches, dead cats, and pools of water bear witness! Was he then the trumpeter of persecution? Was his pulpit changed into Hudibras's "drum ecclesiastic?" Did he abet banishment and proscription on the score of conscience? Now that his *tabernacle* is established in peace, after the clouds have borne testimony to his mission*, he complains in his second letter, wherein he promises to continue the fire which he has already kindled in England, that people of exalted ranks in church and state have refused entering into a mean confederacy against the laws of nature, and the rights of mankind. In his first letter, he disclaims persecution on the score of religion, and, in the same breath, strikes out a creed of his own for the Roman Catholics, and says, "that they should not be tolerated even amongst the Turks." Thus, the satyr in the fable breathes hot and cold in the same blast, and a lamb of peace is turned inquisitor. "But is not that creed mentioned by Mr. Wesley, the creed of the Roman Catholics?" By right it should be theirs, as it is so often bestowed on them, and that, according to the civil law, a free gift becomes

* See an abridgment of Wesley's Journal, wherein he says, that in preaching one day at Kinsale, a cloud pitched over him.

becomes the property of the person to whom it is bestowed, if there be no legal disqualification on either side. But the misfortune is, that the Catholics and the framers of the fictitious creed so often refuted, and still forced on them, resemble the Frenchman and the blunderer in the comedy; one forces into the other's mouth a food which he cannot relish, and against which his stomach revolts.

Mr. Wesley places in the front of his lines, the *general* council of Constance, places the pope in the centre, and brings up the rear of his squadrons with a confabulation between a priest and a woman, whilst his letters are skirmishing on the *wings*. Let us march from the rear to the front, for *religious warriors seldom observe order*.

A priest then said to a woman whom Mr. Wesley knows, "I see you are no heretic: you have the experience of a real Christian." "And would you burn me?" said she. "God forbid!" replied the priest, "except for the good of the church." Now this priest must be descended from some of those who attempted to blow up a river with gunpowder, in order to drown a city*. Or he must have

* Among other plots attributed to the Roman Catholics in the reign of Charles the first, this extraordinary one was charged upon them.—See Hume.

have taken her for a witch; whereas, by his own confession, "she was no heretic." A gentleman whom I *know* declared to me upon his honour, that he heard Mr. Wesley repeat in a sermon, preached by him in the city of Cork, the following words: "A little bird cried out in Hebrew,—O Eternity! Eternity! Who can tell the length of Eternity?" I am then of opinion, that a *little Hebrew bird* gave Mr. Wesley the important information about the *priest* and the *woman*: one story is as interesting as the other; and both are equally alarming to the Protestant interest. Hitherto it is a drawn battle between us; from the reere then, let us advance to the van, and try if the *general* council of Constance, which Mr. Wesley places at the head of his legions, be impenetrable to the sword of truth.

After reading the ecclesiastical history concerning that council, and Dr. Hay's answer to W. A. Drummond, I have gone through the drudgery of examining it all over in St. Patrick's library, when Mr. Wesley's letters made their appearance. The result of my researches is, a conviction that there is no such doctrine as "Violation of faith with heretics," authorized by that council. Pope Martin V. whom the fathers of that council elected, published a bull, wherein he declares, "That it is
" not

“not lawful for a man to perjure himself on
 “any account, even for the faith.” Subsequent
 pontiffs have lopped off the excrescences of
 relaxed casuistry.

The pope's *borns* then are not so dangerous
 as to induce Mr. Wesley to sing the lamenta-
 tions of Jeremiah the prophet, deploring the
 loss of Jerusalem, or to send us from London
 an Hebrew elegy to be modulated on the key
 of the Irish *Ologone*. “Their souls are pained,
 “and their hearts tremble for the ark of God*.
 “Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the
 “streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the
 “Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the
 “uncircumcised triumph.”

This same elegy resounded through Great
 Britain a little before the *ark* of England was
 destroyed, the sceptre wrested out of the hands
 of her king, her pontiffs deprived of their
 mitres, and her noblemen banished from her
 senate. Thus, as the Delphian sword slaugh-
 tered the victim in honour of the Gods, and
 dispatched the criminal on whom the sentence
 of the law was passed, the scripture is made
 subservient to profane, as well as sacred pur-
 poses. It recommends and enforces subordina-
 tion, and, at the same time, becomes an arsenal
 from

* Defence of the Protestant Association, p. 202.

from whence faction takes it arms. Like Boileau's heroes, in the Battle of the Books, we ransack old councils; we disturb the bones of old divines, who, wrapped up in their parchment blankets, sleep at their ease on the shelves of libraries, where they would snore for ever, if the noise of the *gun-prouder* upon an anniversary day, or the restless hands of pamphlet writers, industrious in inflaming the rabble, did not rouse them from their slumber. Peace to their manes! The charity sermon preached in Dublin by Doctor Campbell, the anniversary sermon preached in Cork last November by Doctor la Malliere, and the discourse to the Echlinville volunteers, by Mr. Dickson, have done more good in one day, either by procuring relief for the distressed, or by promoting benevolence, peace, and harmony amongst fellow-subjects of all denominations, than the folios written on pope Joan have done in the space of two hundred years.

I must now sound the retreat, with a design to return to the charge, and to attack Mr. Wesley's first battery, on which he has mounted the *canons* of the council of Constance. If I cannot succeed from want of abilities, but not from want of the armour of truth, I am sure of making a retreat, in which it is impossible to cut me off. For in the very supposition that the council of Constance, and all the councils of
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the world, had defined "violation of faith with heretics," as an article of faith, and that I do not believe it, "violation," then, "of faith with heretics," is no article of my belief. For, to form one's belief, it is not sufficient to read a proposition in a book. Interior conviction must captivate the mind. The Arian reads the Divinity of Christ in the New Testament, and still denies it: would Mr. Wesley assert that the Divinity of Christ is an article of the Arian faith? If then "violation of faith with heretics," be the *tessera fidei*, the badge of the Roman Catholic religion, the Roman Catholics are all Protestants, and as well entitled to sing their psalms, as Mr. Wesley his canticles. I would not be one hour a member of any religion that would profess such a creed as Mr. Wesley has sent us from London.

You may, perhaps, be surprized, Gentlemen, that the introduction to a serious subject should favour so little of the gloom and fullness so familiar to polemical writers; or, that the ludicrous and serious should be so closely interwoven with each other.——

But, remark a set of men who tax the nobility, gentry, and head clergy of England with *degeneracy*, for not degrading the dignity of their ranks and professions. Remark them exposing their parchments in meeting-houses and vestries,

vestries, begging the signatures of every peasant and mendicant, who comes to hear the gospel: "Wrong no man; he that loves his neighbour fulfils the law," &c. and those pious souls "pained and trembling for the ark of God," running with the fagot to kindle the flames of sedition, and to oppress their neighbours. Remark, in seventeen hundred and eighty, a lord with his hair cropped, a bible in his hand, turned elder and high-priest at the age of *twenty-three*, and fainting for the ARK OF ISRAEL!

In the fore-ground of this extraordinary picture, remark a MISSIONARY, who has reformed the very reformation; separated from all the Protestant churches, and in *trimming* the vessel of religion, which he has brought into a *new dock*, has suffered as much for the sake of conscience, as Lodowic Muggleton or James Nailer could register in their martyrology. Remark that same gentleman inflaming the rabble, dividing his Majesty's subjects, propagating black slander, and throwing the gauntlet to people who never provoked him. Is not fanaticism, the mother of cruelty, and the daughter of folly, the first character in this *religious masquerade*? Is it not the first spring that gives motion to these extraordinary figures, so corresponsive to Hogarth's Enraged

raged Musician? And in fencing with folly, have not the gravest authors handled the foils of ridicule? To the modern Footes and Molières, or to the young student in rhetoric, who employs irony in enlarging on his theme, should I for ever leave the "pained souls and "trembling hearts," of the Scotch Jonathan and the English Samuel, with their squadrons of Israelites fighting "for the ark of the Lord," if what they style in England the Gordonian Affociations, had not voted their thanks to Mr. Wesley, for what they call his *excellent letter*. Such a performance is worthy the approbation of such censors; and in their holy shrines the sacred relic should be repositied. In examining a performance which contains in a small compass, all the horrors invented by blind and misguided zeal, set forth in the most bitter language, I shall confine myself to the strict line of an apologist, who clears himself and his principles from the foulest aspersions. To the public and their impartial reason, the appeal shall be made. To the sentiments implanted in the human breast, and to the conduct of man, not to the rubbish of the schools, Mr. Wesley should have made application, when he undertook to solve the interesting problem, Whether the Roman Catholics should be tolerated, or persecuted? But inspired writers partake of the spirit of the *seers*, and copy

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as much as possible after the prophets : the prophet Ezechiel breathed on a pile of bones, and lo ! a formidable army starting from the earth and ranging itself in battle-array. Mr. Wesley blows the dust of an old book, and lo ! squadrons of religious warriors engaged in a crusade for the extirpation of the infidels.

The loyalty, the conduct, the virtues common to all, the natural attachment of man to his interest and country, the peaceable behaviour of the Roman Catholics, have no weight in the scale of candour and justice. An old council, held four hundred years ago, is ransacked and misconstrued ; a Roman Catholic is unworthy of being tolerated amongst the Turks, because Mr. Wesley puts on his spectacles to read old Latin.

I have the honour to remain,

Gentlemen,

Your humble and obedient servant,

MARY'S-LANE, DUBLIN,
FEBRUARY 28, 1780.

ARTHUR O'LEARY.

L E T T E R II.

(ADDRESSED AS THE FORMER.)

GENTLEMEN,

FANATICISM is a kind of religious folly. We laughed at it in a former letter. Whoever has a mind to indulge his humour at our expence, is heartily welcome. You now expect a serious answer to a serious charge. I send you such as occurs.

“The council of Constance has openly
“avowed violation of faith with heretics. But
“it has never been openly disclaimed. There-
“fore,” concludes Mr. Wesley, “the Roman
“Catholics should not be tolerated amongst the
“Turks or Pagans.”

A council so often quoted in anniversary
sermons, parliamentary debates, and flying
Q pamphlets,

pamphlets, challenges peculiar attention. We shall examine it with as much precision as possible, and with the more impartiality, as strict justice shall be done to all parties. Mr. Wesley *knows* that we are all Adam's children, who feel the fatal impressions of our origin, and that ambition which took its rise in Heaven itself, often lurks in a corner of the sanctuary where the ministers of religion offer up their prayers, as well as in the cabinets of kings, where shrewd courtiers form their intrigues. At a time, then, when ambition, that insatiable desire of elevation, that worm which stings the heart, and never leaves it at rest, presented the universe with the extraordinary sight of three prelates reviving the restless spirit of the Roman triumvirate, and disturbing the peace of mankind as much with their spiritual weapons, as Octavius, Anthony, and Lepidus had disturbed it with their armed legions. At a time when the broachers of new doctrines were kindling up the fire of sedition, and after shaking the foundations of what was then the established religion, were shaking the foundations of thrones and empires. At that critical time, in fourteen hundred and fourteen, was held the council of Constance, with a design, as the fathers of that council express themselves, to reform the church in her head and members; and put an end to the calamities which the restless pride of three

three bishops, assuming the titles of popes by the names of Gregory the twelfth, Benedict the thirteenth, and John the twenty-third, had brought on Europe, split into three grand factions by the ambition of the above-mentioned competitors. Such transactions in the ministers of a religion that preaches up peace and humility as the solid foundations on which the structure of all Christian virtues is to be raised, may startle the unthinking reader, and give him an unfavourable idea of religion: but we are never to confound the weakness of the minister with the holiness of his ministry.—We respect the sanctuary in which Stephen officiated,—though Nicholas profaned it; we revere the place from whence Judas fell,—and to which Matthias was promoted: the scriptures respect the chair of Moses,—though they censure several pontiffs who sat in it; and no Catholic canonizes the vices of popes,—though he respects their station and dignity. The pontifical throne is still the same, whether it be filled by a cruel Alexander the sixth, or a benevolent Ganganelli.

To the council of Constance was cited then John Hufs, a Bohemian, famous for propagating errors tending to tear the mitre from the heads of bishops, and wrest the sceptre from the hands of kings: in a word, he was ob-

noxious to church and state; and if Mr. Wesley and I preached up his doctrine *in the name of God*, we would be condemned *in the name of the king*. The Protestant and Catholic divines would banish us from their universities, and the judges of assize would exterminate us from civil society. Such a doctor had no indulgence to expect from a council, which, after deposing two rivals for the popedom, condemned a third for contumacy, and elected another in his room.

But in mentioning John Hufs, whose trial and execution at Constance have given rise to the foul charge of *violation of faith with heretics*, let none imagine that I am an apologist for the fiery execution of persons, on the score of religious opinions. Let the legislators who were the first to invent the cruel method of punishing the errors of the mind with the excruciating tortures of the body, answer for their own laws. I am of opinion, that the true religion, propagated by the effusion of the blood of its martyrs, would still triumph without burning the flesh of heretics; and that the Protestant * and Catholic legislators who have substituted the blazing pile in the room of Phalaris's brazen bull, might have pointed out a more

* The Imperial laws which condemned heretics to the flames, have been put into execution by Calvin, queen Elizabeth, James the first, &c.

more lenient punishment for victims who, in their opinion, had no prospect during the interminable space of a boundless eternity, but that of *passing from one fire into another*. If in enacting such laws, they had consulted the true spirit of religion, I believe the reformation of their own hearts would have been a more acceptable sacrifice to the Divinity, than hecatombs of human victims. "No God nor man," says Tertullian, "should be pleased with a forced service." "We are not to persecute those whom God tolerates," says St. Augustine. That faith is fictitious which is inspired by the edge of the sword.

But still the nature of society is such, that when once the common land-marks are set up, it opposes the hand of the individual that attempts to remove them. Where one common mode of worship is established, and fenced by the laws of the state, whoever attempts to overthrow it, must expect to meet with opposition and violence, until custom softens the rigour of early prejudices, and reconciles us to men whose features and lineaments are like our own, but still seem strange to us because their thoughts are different.

How far opposition to religious innovations is justifiable, is not our business to discuss. But
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the experience of ages evinces the fact; and in dissimilar circumstances, Mr. Wesley has made the trial. In kingdoms, where, as in the Roman Pantheon, every divinity had its altars, speculative deviations from the religion established by law, the singularity of love-feasts and nocturnal meetings, so unusual among the modern Christians of every denomination, roused the vigilance of the magistrate, and influenced the rage of the rabble. Now, that custom has rendered Mr. Wesley's meeting-houses and mode of worship familiar, and that all denominations enjoy a share of that religious liberty, whereof he would fain deprive his Roman Catholic neighbour, his matin hymns give no uneasiness either to the magistrate, or his neighbours. But had Mr. Wesley raised his notes on the high key of *civil discordance*—had he attempted by his sermons, his writings and exhortations, to deprive the bishops of the established religion, of their croziers; kings of their thrones; and magistrates of the sword of justice; long ere now would his *pious labours*, have been crowned with martyrdom, and his name registered in the calendar of *Fox's saints*. Such, unfortunately, was the case of John Huss. Not satisfied with overthrowing what was then the established religion, and levelling the fences of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, he strikes at the root of all temporal power, and civil authority.

thority. He boldly asserts that "Princes, magistrates, &c. in the state of mortal sin, are deprived *ipso facto* of all power and jurisdiction."* In this doctrine was enveloped the seeds of anarchy and sedition, which subsequent preachers unfolded to the destruction of peace and tranquillity, almost all over Europe; and which Sir William Blackstone describes as follows: "The dreadful effect of such a religious bigotry, when actuated by erroneous principles, even of the Protestant kind, are sufficiently evident from the history of the Anabaptists † in Germany, the Covenanters in Scotland, and the deluge of sectaries in England, who murdered their sovereign, overturned the church and monarchy, shook
" every

* See the acts of the council of Constance in L'Abbe's Collection of councils.

† This is no imputation on the Anabaptists of our days, who are as peaceable and good men as any others. Men's opinions change with the times, as in different stages of life we change our thoughts, and settle at the age of forty the roving imagination of sixteen. Custom, and mutual intercourse amongst fellow-subjects of every denomination, would soon quench the remaining sparks of religious feuds, if distinctive laws were abolished. But, unfortunately for the society in which we live, the laws, whose aim should be to unite the inhabitants, are calculated to divide them. My neighbour distrusts me, because the penal laws held me forth as a reprobate
before

“ every pillar of law, justice, and private property, and most devoutly established a kingdom of saints in their stead.”*

John Huss, then, after broaching the above-mentioned doctrines, and making Bohemia the theatre of intestine war, is summoned to appear before the council. He obtains a safe-conduct from the emperor Sigismund, commanding governors of province, &c. not to molest him on his journey to, or return from, Constance; but to afford him every aid and assistance.

Before I was born, and during my life encouraged him to seize my horse, or drag me before a magistrate for saying my prayers; which reduces me to the sad necessity of hating him, or considering him as an enemy, if in the great struggle between nature and grace, religion does not triumph. Before Lewis the fourteenth and George the first, repealed the laws against witches, every disfigured old woman was in danger of her life, and considered as a sorceress. Since the *witch-making* laws have been repealed, there is not a witch in the land, and the dairy-maid is not under the necessity of using counter charms to hinder the milk from being enchanted from her pail. Thus, if the penal laws, which by a kind of omnipotence create an original sin, making rogues of catholics before they reach their hands to the tempting fruit, were once repealed, they would be as honest as their neighbours, and the objects of their love and confidence.

* Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. IV. chap. 8.

assistance. In all the provinces and cities through which he passes, he gives public notice of his intention to appear before the council and stand his trial. But instead of standing his trial, and retracting his errors, he attempts to make his escape, in order to disseminate, and make them take deeper root. He is arrested and confined, in order that he should take his trial, after having *violated* his promise, and abused a safe-conduct granted him for the purpose of exculpating himself, or retracting his errors, if proved against him before his competent judges. It is here to be remarked, that John Huss was an ecclesiastic; and that in spiritual cases the bishops were his only and competent judges. The boundaries of the two powers, I mean the church and state, being kept distinct; the censer left to the pontiff, and the sword to the magistrate; the church confined to her spiritual weapons; privation of life and limb, and corporal punishments being quite of the province of the state; one should not interfere with the other. As the body of the criminal is under the controul of the magistrate, too jealous of his privilege to permit the church to interfere with his power;—so, erroneous doctrines are under the controul of spiritual judges, too jealous of their prerogatives to permit the civil magistrate to interfere with their rights.—Hence, when the partizans
of

of Hufs raised clamours about his confinement, and pleaded his safe-conduct, the council published the famous decree which has given rise to so many cavils, for the space of four hundred years, though thousands of laws of a more important nature, and of which we now think but little, have been published since that time. The council declares, " That every safe-conduct granted by the emperor, kings, and other temporal princes, to heretics, or persons accused of heresy, ought not to be of any prejudice to the Catholic faith, or to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction; nor to hinder that such persons may and ought to be examined, judged, and punished, according as justice shall require, if those heretics refuse to revoke their errors: and the person who shall have promised them security, shall not, in this case, be obliged to keep his promise, by whatever tie he may be engaged, because he has done all that is in his power to do." I appeal to the impartial public, whether that declaration of the council does not regard the peculiar case of *safe-conducts*, granted by temporal princes, to persons who are liable to be tried by competent and independent tribunals? And, whether it be not an insult to candour and common sense, to give it such a latitude as to extend it to every lawful promise, contract or engagement between man and man?

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As if the council of Constance meant to authorize me to buy my neighbour's goods, and after a solemn promise to pay him, still to keep his substance, and break my word. The church and state are two distinct and independent powers, each in its peculiar line.—A man is to be tried by the church for erroneous doctrines: a temporal prince grants this man a safe-conduct, to guard his person from any violence which may be offered him on his journey; and to procure him a fair and candid trial, on his appearance before his lawful judges. Has not this prince done all that is in his power to do? Doth his promise to such a man authorize him to interfere with a foreign and independent jurisdiction, or to usurp the rights of another? Do not the very words of the council, "Because he has done all that is in his power to do," prove that lawful promises are to be fulfilled?

Such juriconsults, whether Catholics or Protestants, such as Prenus, Speklam, and others, as I have accidentally read, concerning the nature of safe-conducts, lay down for a general rule, that they are never granted to suspend the execution of the laws. *Salvus conductus contra jus non datur.* It were nugatory in the emperor Sigismund, presumptive heir to a kingdom, which Huss's doctrine had
changed

changed into a theatre of intestine wars, to grant a safe-conduct, the meaning and sense whereof would be equivalent to the following pass:
 “ Although you have set kingdoms in a blaze,
 “ by striking at the vitals of temporal authority, and overthrown the established religion
 “ of the land; yet go to Constance and come
 “ back, without appearing before your lawful
 “ judges, or retracting doctrines which have
 “ caused such disturbances in church and state.”
 Safe-conducts then are not granted to screen delinquents from punishment, when legally convicted; much less, to countenance disobedience to the laws, and disorder, by impunity.

The council was the most competent judge of Huss's doctrine, in which he steadfastly persevered. Neither king nor emperor could deprive the bishops of privileges inseparably annexed to their characters, viz. spiritual jurisdiction, and the right of judging doctrines. Huss was degraded, and retrenched, according to the usual formalities, from a communion from which he had separated himself before. This is all the bishops could have done: this they acknowledge after the sentence of Huss's degradation was pronounced. “ This sacred
 “ synod of Constance, considering that the
 “ church of Christ has nothing further that it
 “ can

"can do, decrees to leave John Huss to the judgment of the state." His execution was in consequence of the imperial laws, enforced by the civil magistrate, as the execution of heretics in England and other Protestant states, has been in consequence of the Imperial laws adopted by such powers. The Protestant clergy, as well as the clergy of Constance, decided upon points of doctrine, and went no farther.

Thus we see, that this superannuated charge of *violation of faith with heretics*, resembles those nightly spectres which vanish upon a nearer approach. We find nothing in this council, relative to such a charge, but a dispute about a pass granted to a man who goes to take his trial before judges whose jurisdiction could not be superseded. Or if we intend to do justice to men with the same eagerness that we are disposed to injure them, we must acknowledge that the fathers of that council condemned lies, frauds, perjury, and those horrors which Mr. Wesley would fain fix upon the Roman Catholics. The foundations then on which Mr. Wesley has erected his aerial fabric, being once sapped, the superstructure must fall of course; and his long train of false and unchristian assertions are swept away as a *spider's web*, before the *wind* of logical

cal rules. *From absurd premises follows an absurd conclusion.*

What greater absurdity than Mr. Wesley's insisting upon a general council's disclaiming a doctrine it never taught. If Mr. Wesley be so credulous as to believe that the pope has horns, must we convene a general council to declare that his forehead is smooth? Is it not sufficient to disclaim the truth of the odious imputation, when the false creed is fixed on us? We are really of opinion, that whoever believes us capable of harbouring such sentiments, is capable of putting the horrid maxims in practice. He must have studied the human heart, not in the books of nature, but Hobbes's Leviathan; and should curse his fate that Providence has been so unkindly partial to him.

Rousseau declares, that if he had been present at the resurrection of Lazarus, he would not have believed it. "The apparition," says he, "would have made a fool of me, by frightening me out of my senses, but it would never have made a convert of me."

If a general council were held in order to *disclaim* the ridiculous and abominable creed imputed to Roman Catholics; the sceptic, who gives no credit to their doctors and universities,

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to the oaths and declarations of millions, would give no credit to a convention of bishops with the pope at their head.

Let the appeal be made, not to stubborn sceptics, but to those who listen to the voice of reason, and consult the heart. This interior monitor, when passion and prejudice are hushed into silence, is seldom consulted in vain. Let us not travel to Catholic states where perjury is punished with death, and every argument tending to prove that the pope can absolve subjects from oaths, and grant a dispensation to commit all kinds of crimes, is confuted with a halter. Let us look nearer home, and compare what we see on one hand, with what is supposed on the other.

We see a million and half of Roman Catholics smarting under the most oppressive laws that the human heart could ever devise! When they were enacted, our ancestors had the lands of their fathers and the religion of their education. If perjury had been an article of their belief, they could have secured their inheritance, by taking an oath of abjuration. If papal dispensations were, in their opinion, lenitives to an ulcerated conscience, when, or where could they have been more seasonably applied, than at that time and place, where
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the properties of millions depended on the application?

If oaths against conviction, dispensations with perjury, and anticipated absolutions from future crimes, were articles of their belief, they would have prevented the blazing comets which scorch the living, and spread their influence to the dormitories of the dead, from kindling in their native air; and hindered cruelty, which is disarmed in the tyrant's breast at sight of the expiring victim, from pursuing them to the grave, and depriving them of the *cold* comfort of mingling their ashes with those of their ancestors.*

Those laws which have banished our nobility from the senate; deprived our gentry of the liberty of wearing a sword, either as a means of defence against the midnight assassin, or as a part of dress in the open day;—the merchant of the power of realizing the fruits of his industry, in obtaining landed security for his money, or the liberty of purchasing; the lower class of people of the liberty
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* The penal laws offered the most galling insult to the Roman Catholic gentry, at the time of their being enacted. Their burying places were in the ruins of old abbeys, founded by their ancestors. A law was enacted, prohibiting to bury in those dreary haunts of cats and weasels, and a fine of ten shillings was to be levied on every person who assisted at the funeral.

of becoming common soldiers, mayor's sergeants, or coal-measurers, and the valiant youth of serving his king, and reaping laurels in defence of his country;—these laws are still in being. It is true, to the honour of the Irish senate, they have staunched the blood flowing this long time past from one of the most tender veins of the human heart, by putting it out of the power of the profligate son to betray and rob his tender and hoary father. But, still the insidious neighbour can seize his neighbour's horse; the unfaithful husband can banish his chaste and virtuous wife, after the *oath* pledged in presence of God, at the nuptial solemnity; the designing villain can set fire to his house, and build a new one, at the expence of his Catholic neighbours, who were asleep whilst he himself was lighting the fagot*.

Thus like a *running evil*, in a successive gradation, they ulcerate every part of the body: and, though the lenity of the magistrate is a kind of mollifying application, that may as-

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* Mr. O'Leary was present when the case was tried in the county court-house of Cork. He has likewise seen the venerable matron, after twenty-four years marriage, banished from the perjured husband's house, though it was proved in open court, that for six months before his marriage, he went to mass. But the law requires that he should be a year and a day of the same religion.

suage the sore for a certain time; yet whilst the noxious humour lurks within the recess of the law, we can never expect a radical cure.

“ It is needless to comment upon the spirit
 “ of such laws.—The very recital chills with
 “ horror:” So remarks my learned and worthy acquaintance, Doctor Campbell. “ Let
 “ it not be argued, that these laws are seldom
 “ put in execution. Is property to depend
 “ upon the courtesy of an avaricious, malignant neighbour?—Damocles was, perhaps,
 “ safe enough under the suspended sword of
 “ Dionysius; but the apprehension of danger
 “ scared away those visions of happiness which
 “ he had seen in the envied pomp of tyranny*.” “ Laws,” says the president Montesquieu, “ which do all the mischief that can be
 “ done, in cold blood;” and to which Lucretius might allude in his famous Epiphonema: *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!* Could religion be productive of such mischief! That philosopher, who in reading the epitaph of a voluptuous monarch, cried out that it was better suited to an ox than to a king: *Bove quam rege dignius*, in reading the penal code, could form another antithesis: “ The seal that gave a sanction

* Philosophical survey of the South of Ireland. P. 251-2.

"tion to such laws, should rather bear the im-
 "pression of the claws of a lion, than the head
 "of a queen."*

Such are the laws to whose unrelenting rigour we are every day exposed. The disposition of man, so averse to restraint, would soon shake off the oppressive burden, if the importunate voice of conscience did not silence the cries of nature, and intimate to the Catholic, that, "death is preferable to perjury." The remedy is in our own hands, and we daily refuse to apply it, though a small bandage could soon close up the bleeding veins of oppression, and a slight palliative remove the temporal grievances of which we complain. The churches are open; and though Mr. Wesley says, that "our oaths are light as air," yet one oath taken against the conviction of our consciences, would level the fences, and "sweep" away all the penal laws "as so ma-

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* Queen Anne, the last sovereign of the Stuart line, who after combining against her father, and violating the articles of Limerick, under pretence of strengthening the Protestant religion, gave a sanction to those laws; though her chief aim was to secure herself against the claims of her brother. Thus, religion often becomes an engine of policy, in the hands of sovereigns. Query to Civilians: Should not oppressive laws cease, when the motives that gave rise to them subsist no more?

“ny spider’s webs,” to use his *delicate* expression. This is an argument which speaks to the feelings of man, and which no sophistry can ever refute. The priests themselves are interested in the profanation: for, by entering into a collusion with their flocks, and using their magic powers to forgive all sins, *past, present, and to come*, they could permit them to graze on the *commons of legal indulgence*; and by turning them into a richer pasture, expect more milk and wool. Avarice has ever been the reproach of the sanctuary: it is recorded in Scripture, that the priests of the old law used to take the best part of the victim to themselves, before it was offered to the God of Israel, and that Judas sold our Saviour for thirty pieces of silver. Mr. Wesley then must *charitably* presume, that no *priest* will forego his personal interest in compliment to his successor; and as it is his interest to impose upon his votaries, to slacken the reins, and shelter himself under the shade of the laws; either perjury is no part of his belief, or he must be too scrupulous; which in Mr. Wesley’s opinion is *heresy* to believe. In ethics, as in mathematics, there are self-evident demonstrations; no proposition in Euclid is more clear than the following: “A person who does not think
“perjury

“perjury a crime, would not forfeit a guinea
“from reluctance to an oath.” The Roman
Catholics forfeit every privilege rather than take
an oath against their conscience.

Are not they Adam's children? Have they
not the same sensations of pain and pleasure
as other men? Their vices and virtues, do
they not run into the same channels with those
of their Protestant neighbours? Are they not
animated with the same desires of glory, al-
lured by the blandishments of pleasure, courted
by the charms of riches, as eager for the enjoy-
ment of ease and opulence? If perjury be
their creed, if their clergy be endued with the
magic power of forgiving not only *present* but
future sins, why do not they glide gently down
the stream of legal liberty, instead of stem-
ming the torrent of oppression? Why do not
they qualify themselves for sitting in the se-
nate, and giving laws to the land in concert
with their countrymen, instead of being the
continual objects of penal sanctions? It is,
that they are diametrically the reverse of what
they are represented. Their religion forbids
them to sport with the awful name of the Di-
vinity. They do not choose to impose upon
their neighbours, or themselves, by perjury;
nor

nor run the risque of eternal death for a little honey.—Were it otherwise, in three weeks time they could all read their recantations, and be on a level with the rest of their fellow-subjects: they could imitate that philosopher who had two religions,—one for himself, and another for his country. Yet the archives of national justice can prove, that Catholics, reduced to the necessity of discovering against themselves, preferred the loss of their estates to the guilt of perjury, when a false oath could have secured them in their property. Notwithstanding this imputed creed, they prefer the smarting afflictions of the body to the stinging remorse of the soul; and when worldly prosperities stand in competition with conscience, they rather choose to be its martyrs than executioners.

Gentlemen, reconcile, if you can, perjurers from principle, with sufferers from delicacy of conscience, and I shall style you the children of the *great Apollo*. But are not the Catholics a set of passive machines, veering at the breath of the Pope, who can dispense with them in any thing? “Or what security can they give “to Protestant governors, whilst they acknowledge his spiritual power?” If this be any objection to their loyalty, Catholic kings should banish their Catholic subjects, and introduce Protestants

Protestants in their stead: for, as the Roman Catholic faith is the same all over the world, and that France and Spain are more convenient to the Pope than the Britannic islands, he would have more machines to move, more votaries to obey his mandates, and more facility in compassing his designs. In England and Ireland all the Protestants would oppose him; whereas in Catholic kingdoms, if his power has such an unlimited sway over the conscience of man, as Mr. Wesley asserts, every subject, nay, kings themselves, would be bound to obey him. But Catholic subjects know, that if God must have his own, Cæsar must have his due. In his quality of pontiff, they are ready to kiss the pope's feet: but if he assume the title of conqueror, they are ready to bind his hands. The very ecclesiastical benefices, which are more in the spiritual line, are not at his disposal. When England had more to dread from him than now, a Catholic parliament passed the statute of premunire; the bishops and mitred abbots preferred their own temporal interest to that of the pope, and reserve the benefices to themselves, and the clergy under their jurisdiction. Charity begins at home, and I do not believe any Catholic so divested of it, as to prefer fifty pounds a year under the pope's government, to an hundred under that of a Protestant king. Queen Mary,
so

so devoted to the pope's cause, both on account of her religion, and the justice done to her mother by the inflexible resolution of the sovereign pontiff, still would not cede her temporal rights, nor those of her subjects, in compliment to his spiritual power. After the reconciliation of her kingdom to the apostolical see, a statute was passed, enacting, that the pope's bulls, briefs, &c. should be meerly confined to spirituals, without interfering with the independence of her kingdom, or the rights of her subjects. The history of Europe proclaims aloud, that the Roman Catholics are not passive engines in the hands of popes, and that they confine his power within the narrow limits of his spiritual province. They have often taken his cities, and opposed Paul's sword to Peter's keys, and *silenced the thunders of the vatican* with the noise of the cannon. They know that Peter was a fisherman when kings swayed the sceptre, and that the subsequent grandeur of his successors could never authorise him to alter the primitive institution that commands subjects to obey their rulers, and to give Cæsar his due.

With regard to his spiritual power, you will be surprised, Gentlemen, when I tell you, that, from Lodowic Muggleton down to John Wesley, those who have instituted new sects
amongst

amongst the Christians, have assumed more power than the pope dare to assume over the Catholics.

They may add or diminish : but, with regard to the pope, the landmarks are erected, and we would never permit him to remove them. If he attempted to preach up five sacraments instead of seven, we would immediately depose him. Mr. Wesley may alter his faith as often as he pleases, and prevail on others to do the same ; but the pope can never alter ours : we acknowledged him, indeed, as head of the church,—for every society must have a link of union, to guard against confusion and anarchy ; and, without annexing any infallibility to his person, we acknowledge his title to precedence and pre-eminence. But, in acknowledging him as the *first pilot to steer the vessel*, we acknowledge a compass by which he is to direct his course. He is to preserve the vessel, but never to expose it to shipwreck. Any deviation from the laws of God, the rights of nature, or the faith of our fathers, would be the fatal rock on which the pope himself would split. In a word, the pope is our first pastor ; he may feed, but cannot poison us : we acknowledge no power in him, either to alter our faith, or to corrupt our morals.

If

If the pope's power were then rightly understood, his spiritual supremacy would give no more umbrage to the king of Great Britain, than the jurisdiction of a diocesan bishop. But deep-rooted prejudices can scarcely be removed; and little can be expected from the generality, when the learned themselves are hurried by the tide of popular error.

From want of rightly understanding the case, and attention to the discriminating line drawn by the Catholics between the pope's spiritual and temporal power, sir William Blackstone himself gave into the snare of vulgar delusion. This learned expositor of England's common law, declares the Roman Catholics as well entitled to every legal indulgence as the other dissenters from the established religion, *maugre* their *real presence, purgatory, confessions, &c.* But still the pope's ghost haunts him to such a degree, that he would fain have the Catholics abjure his spiritual supremacy. But sir William, who has exposed himself to the censure of Mr. Sheridan, in establishing the formidable right of conquest over Ireland, and to the animadversions of the divines, by declaring that "an act of parliament can alter the religion of the land," (as if, by act of parliament, we should all become Turks, be circumcised, and expect an earthly Paradise)

Paradise)—has exposed himself to the reproaches of every smatterer in divinity, who could ask him, If, in acknowledging the spiritual jurisdiction of the bishop of London, he encroached upon the privileges of the Lord Mayor.

But in talking of the power of parliament “to alter the religion of the land,” sir William has argued from facts; and in talking of the *spiritual* power of the pope, he must have argued from hearsay. The lawyer may be excused when he talks of spiritual powers: but what apology can be pleaded by the apostle and divine, who, like Tristram Shandy's priest, baptizes the child before he is born, and grants popes and priests the power of forgiving all sins, not only *past* and *present* but *sins to come*; this Mr. Wesley asserts: It is a surprising magic that *forgives* now, the sin that is to be committed a hundred years hence: let no one deprive Mr. Wesley of the glory of the *invention*. Past sins, in our belief, can be forgiven by popes and priests, not as primary agents, but as subordinate instruments in the hands of the Divinity; not according to the absolute will of the priest, but according to the dispositions of the penitent, and the clauses of the covenant of mercy, which the priest can neither alter, nor disannul.

The

The dark recesses of the criminal conscience must be searched. The monster must be stifled in the heart that gave it birth. A sincere sorrow for past guilt, a firm resolution to avoid future lapses, and every possible atonement to the injured Deity, and the injured neighbour, are the previous and indispensable requisites. Take away any of the three conditions, and the pope's and priest's absolution are but empty sounds; the keys of the church rattle in vain: they are no more than the mutterings of force-rers, or words of incantation pronounced over a dead body, without ever imparting to it the genial heat of animation and vitality. Popes nor priests can do no more than God himself, —and the scriptures declare, that God will never forgive the sinner without sorrow and repentance. And the schoolmen dispute, whether, by an absolute power, he could raise to the beatific vision, a soul polluted with the defilements of guilt. If then the priest's absolution be any plea against Roman Catholics, it may as well be said that the promise of the Most High, "to pardon the repentant sinner, although "his sins were as red as scarlet," encourages men to commit sin; or that a man may take an oath contrary to his conscience, under the idea, that a subsequent repentance will gain forgiveness and pardon.

" But

“ But is it not intolerable presumption in
“ man to arrogate such power ?” Be it so ; I
am an apologist when I write in a public pa-
per : controversy I leave to the schools. If I
make my confession to a priest, what is it to
my neighbour ? Society will gain by the *pre-*
tended superstition : for the most immoral Ca-
tholics are those who seldom or never frequent
the sacraments. I look on the pretended con-
ferences of Numa Pompilius with the nymph
Egeria, as a meer fiction, devised by that po-
litical prince. Yet I admire the wisdom of the
legislator, who introduced a plan of softening
the savage manners of his uncivilized subjects,
and smoothing the asperity of stubborn nature
by religious awe. Those who are unacquainted
with the nature of confession, may consider it
as *priest-craft*, yet neither master, or landlord
will ever lose by the imposture ; when their
servants and tenants kneel to a priest, whose
duty is to revive in their minds the notions of
probity and virtue. Thus, the wisest of the
Protestant churches have never discountenanc-
ed confession : the form of absolution, and the
previous dispositions required on the part of the
penitent are set down at large in the liturgy :
and as to the power of forgiving sins granted
to the ministers of religion, express mention is
made of it in the scriptures. Mr. Wesley must
acknowledge this power, whether it consists in
the

the priestly absolution, or in the preaching of the gospel, or “in pious canticles, sung with a
“skilful tongue and harmonious voice, lifting
“the rising soul and plunging it into a mysti-
“cal slumber, as soothing and soft as the balm
“of Gilead.”*

Such Christians as acknowledge original sin, and the virtue of baptism to cancel the unavoidable debt, must acknowledge that the minister of religion effaces the stain by applying the elements. If the Catholics believe that by the institution of Christ, the minister of religion can forgive sins, they are convinced at the same time, that he is no more than a subordinate agent, who derives his power from a superior being, in absolving the adult, as he derives his power from the same source, when he purifies the soul of the infant. I know full well that God could change the heart of man, and forgive sins in young and old, without the interposition of a human being. The prophet, who was consulted by two Jewish kings, and before he would give an answer called for a harp,

* See an abridgment of Wesley's journal, where he compares the impressions he made on his hearers to the *balm of Gilead*. As far as I can recollect, he relates in his large journal a surprising history of one of his acquaintances, who fell into a pious slumber, which deserves to be recorded in the history of the *Seven sleepers*.

harp, could have received the prophetic inspiration, without touching the strings of the tuneful lyre. Christ could have restored the blind man to his sight without applying the mud to his eyes, and converted the world without exposing his apostles to martyrdom. But am I to bring him to an account for using intermediate agents; or what I think to be an institution of the Divinity, is it not my duty to abide by it? Happy those who can save themselves without the assistance of any other! Thrice happy Mr. Wesley! who is already registered in the *book of life*, and empowered to grant *in-amissable* security to others for the anticipated enjoyment of eternal bliss. He can sum up the number of the holy souls who have climbed up the steps of the mystical ladder, and on the highest step of all, as on the ramparts of an impregnable fortress, reckon so many souls *confirmed* in a state of *in-amissable* sanctity*, whilst I am so miserable as not to know whether I am *worthy of love or hatred*,
and

* See Wesley's Journal, where he declares, that on his visitation, he met so many *sanctified*, so many *justified*, and so many *confirmed* in love. *Qui potest capiat*. I cannot comprehend this mystical divinity. By confirmation in love, he must mean, that whoever believes himself once arrived to that happy state, can sin no more. I am glad to see a fellow-creature *confirmed* in the love of God.—But I am sorry to find some so *ill-confirmed* in the love of their neighbour,

and have millions of times more reason than St. Paul to solicit the prayers of my fellow-christians, *lest that in praying for others, I myself may become a reprobate.*

In our communion, Gentlemen, we never hold forth our confessions and absolutions as licences for guilt, but as curbs to the passions. Our priests make their confessions, as well as the laity; for no priest can absolve himself, nor flatter himself with impunity in committing *present or future crimes.* Our directors point out the path to the wayfaring pilgrim, between the two extremes of *despair* and *presumption*: to guard against the first, the gates of penance are thrown open, as so many avenues that lead to mercy: to guard against the second, the dread of God's judgments, the uncertainty of the last hour, the abuses of God's graces, which, if neglected, swell the long list of crimes and punishments, are held forth in all their terrors.

We represent to the guilty conscience, sinking under a weight of anxieties and crimes, the penitent thief crying out for mercy, and obtaining pardon. We represent to the obsti-

natn-
neighbour, as to tell half Europe to their faces, that they are *perjurers*, and to apologize for a rabble, who set fire to their neighbours houses. This is what we call an *ardent or burning love.*

nate and presumptuous sinner, the impenitent thief, threatening reprobation. We know, that whilst the serpent is raised up in the wilderness, no wound is incurable: we know, on the other hand, that, when criminal cities had filled up the measure of their iniquity, in vain did Abraham lift up his hands to Heaven, to solicit their pardon. If we place between the Judge and the sinner a great Mediator; tho' the Mediator and Judge be the same, yet we place between the Mediator and sinner an awful Judge. We earnestly recommend the frequent use of confession, because man is so frail that he stands in frequent need of it. But still we recommend it, not as loose reins to humour the sinner's passions, but as a stiff bridle to check their sallies. We never encourage our penitents to new disorders, but inspire them with detestation for former guilt, and fear of swelling the score; for we know the danger of affronting mercy by new crimes, but cannot know the fatal point where paternal goodness is limited. Thus we lead our penitents in the intermediate path between despair and presumption, by the delicate clue of hope and fear, until they reach the critical term, where the soul after bursting the chains of its earthly prison, takes its flight into the vast region of spirits; and even when arraigned before the judgment seat, we tremble for its destiny.—Such, Gen-

S

tlemen,

tllemen, is the nature of confession, whether you consider it in a useful or abusive light.

Had Mr. Wesley, who, after publishing twenty-six volumes, knows every thing, even the *language of birds*, known its nature, he would not have adduced it as an argument in justification of intolerance, but rather left the *imputed power* of forgiving all kinds of *sins, past, present, and to come*, as a flower of rhetoric to grace the garden of the Cynics. Away then with his *priestly absolutions* and *dispensing powers*. He assumes more power than any priest could pretend to.—Away with *violation of faith with heretics*: we acknowledge no heresy in the duties of social life, or the obligations of Christian virtues.

Such, Gentlemen, are the principles of the Roman Catholics: they are quite the reverse of Mr. Wesley's charges. Let the impartial public decide, whether a set of perjurers, authorised to commit all kinds of crimes with impunity, (such as the Roman Catholics are painted) would suffer one week on the score of conscience? In our faith we follow the maxim of St. James, "Whoever transgresses the law in "one point, is guilty of all." The same rule holds good in morals. In allowing that a man is bad in committing one crime, we do not allow

low that he is guiltless in committing another. The sacrifice must be entire; and grace never sanctifies a divided victory. The fabric of our religion is so closely cemented—the links of the chain which unites all the articles of our faith, are so fastened within each other, that if you take off one of the links, or loosen a stone in the edifice, the whole system is entirely destroyed. If then all the horrors fixed upon us by the dark pencil of misrepresentation, be articles of our belief, when we disclaim them upon oath, we are real *heretics*, and as well entitled to every legal indulgence, as those who go to church, and swear against *Transubstantiation*.

We admire the integrity of Regulus, who suffered the most exquisite tortures, rather than violate an oath given to his enemies. In the administration of distributive justice, the magistrate must give credit to the Heathen, who swears by his false gods, to the Jew, who swears by the Old Testament, and to the Turk, who swears by the Koran. In cases of life and property, he gives credit to the oath of a Roman Catholic, whether he appears as a witness or juror. In giving no credit to the oaths of Roman Catholics, when they disclaim *perjury*, *dispensations for frauds*, *rebellion*, *treachery*, &c. he betrays his judgment, and insults humanity.

But, if judgment has been ever betrayed, or humanity insulted, they are now betrayed and insulted by those persons who compose what they call the *Protestant Associations*, of whom Mr. Wesley is become the apologist. In taking up the pen to conclude this letter, I received their *Appeal to the People of Great-Britain*, printed in London by J. W. Pasham.

Mr. Wesley, who has abridged *his own journal* to give it a greater circulation, has abridged this six-penny pamphlet, in his first letter. In the beginning of the American war, he published his "Calm Address," in order to unite the colonies to the mother country. The "balm of Gilead" proving ineffectual beyond the Atlantic, he now has recourse to caustics at home. Three years ago he intended to unite us: now he intends to divide us. Thus we find Penelope's web in his *religious looms*: what he wove three years ago, he now unravels.

In this "Appeal," on which he passes such encomiums, and the design whereof he declares to be "benevolent," you can perceive the dormant seeds of antiquated fanaticism sprouting anew, and vegetating into religious frenzy, which has deluged the earth with an ocean of calamities, and which would give Heathen princes room to glory, that the gospel has never been preached in their dominions. An apothecary's

theary's shop has never been stocked with more drugs, than this "Appeal" is stocked with massacres. They have inserted in it, the bull, "In Cœnâ Domini," which has never been received in any Catholic kingdom; and from an old book which was foisted on the public in the beginning of the Reformation, as containing the fees of the Roman chancery, they conclude, that "a Roman Catholic can sleep with a woman in a church, and commit there other enormities, by paying nine shillings;" and that "he may murder a man, and commit incest*, on paying seven shillings and six-pence," though shillings and six-pences are English coins, not current in Italy; and in Catholic countries, the murderer expires on the wheel, and whoever commits incest, or profanes the churches by carnal sins, is burnt at the stake. What is more surprising, Gentlemen, these new apostles of the *Gordonian association*, who to use the words of our old friend, Hudibras,

"Their holy faith do found upon

"The sacred text of pike and gun,"

imagine that they are the delegates of Heaven for the salvation of souls; their hands do not brandish

* See the "Appeal from the Protestant Associations," page 18. Printed by Pasham.

brandish the glittering spear on the American plains, where D'Estaing and Prevost dispute the laurel : but, like Samuel, deploring the loss of Saul, their eyes are bathed in tears, and their "bowels yearn for millions of spirits that have "no existence but in the prescience of God," who can pity error, and forgive it, and who is more concerned in their salvation, than Lord G***** G***** or Mr. Wesley.

I am afraid, Gentlemen, that you mind your own souls and bodies more than you mind those of others. To rouse you from your spiritual lethargy, and inflame you with some sparks of love for your neighbour, I send you a piece of a sermon taken from the "Appeal of the associations."

After deploring the "loss of millions of "common people, who are prohibited from "reading the scriptures," (though it were charity to teach them first how to spell), "and "who have souls as infinite, in value and duration, as the proudest prelates, or highest "monarchs upon earth,"—they go on: "to "tolerate Popery, is to be instrumental to the "perdition of immortal souls now existing, "and of millions of spirits, that at present "have no existence but in the prescience of "God; and is the direct way to provoke the "vengeance of an holy and jealous God, to
"bring

“bring down destruction on our fleets and armies.”* I really imagined that the Protestant associations were not so cruel as to refuse me mercy, and exclude me from the kingdom of Heaven, if I lead an honest, sober, and virtuous life. I am convinced, that several of Admiral Rodney's sailors are Roman Catholics, and that the bullets which *told so well*, in mauling poor Langara, were fired by hands that *crossed a Popish* forehead. Oliver Cromwell, *seeking the Lord*, and preaching upon the Sabbath-day, in a leather breeches and buff waistcoat, with his trusty sabre by his side†, did not scruple to enter into a confederacy with Cardinal Mazarini, against the Spaniards: it was equal to England which of the two was foremost in the breach, the French dragoon with his whiskers, after saying *Hail Mary*, or the *Round-head* with his leather cap, after *groaning in the spirit*. Spain lost Dunkirk, and England triumphed.

King William, who, to his honour, could never be prevailed on to violate the articles of Limerick, had six thousand Roman Catholics in his army, when he fought the battle of the Boyne: and the Catholics and Protestants
of

* See the “Appeal from the Protestant Associations,” page 18, and cry out, *Ohone! ohone! ohone!*

† See Gregorio Leti, in his *Life of Cromwell*.

of Switzerland maintain their independence against all the powers on the Continent, in consequence of their union. But the Protestant associations, like Ezechiel, have swallowed a book in which are written *verses*, and *lamentations*, and *woe!* Already their luminous souls, enlightened by the prophetic spirit, see future times unlocking their distant gates, and pouring forth *millions* of monsters; and from a desire to procure the salvation of Adam's children, it is to be dreaded, that, at long run, they will imitate the holy fanatics of Denmark, who, in order to procure Heaven for young infants, after being baptized, used to slaughter them in their cradles.

AN HUMBLE

REMONSTRANCE

TO THE

SCOTCH AND ENGLISH INQUISITORS.

BY WAY OF

AN APOSTROPHE.

GENTLEMEN,

AS a colour to your disorderly and unwarrantable proceedings, you impose on the ignorant by your cant words of *violation of faith with heretics*. Like Boileau's heroes, you are ransacking old books, canvassing legends of exaggerated massacres*, and like scholars, who,
after

* In their Appeal they relate that a hundred thousand Protestants were massacred in 1641 : at that time there were thirty Catholics for every Protestant, and a hundred Protestants escaped for every single Protestant that perished. Let now a balance be struck, and the numbers of inhabitants

after repeating their lesson, fling about the bones and skulls piled up in charnel houses, you haunt the living with the images of the dead. Modern philosophy proves the existence of colours in the eye, but not in exterior objects; what is true in the physical world, is more so in your system of ethics:—the purple hue and black die, in which you would feign misrepresent us to our king and the public, are the result of our organs; and the abortives you lay at our doors, derive their existence from yourselves.

inhabitants calculated, and Ireland must have been but one large city, as crowded as the streets of Rome in the times of Marius and Sylla. This massacre, which should be effaced from the records of the nation, as well as from the memory of man, was begun by a fanatical soldiery, who intended to extirpate Papists and malignants. Whoever has a mind to be informed about this massacre, may read Doctor Warner, Mr. Brooke's Trial of the Roman Catholics, and Doctor Curry's Historical Memoirs, and his History of the Civil Wars of Ireland. But whoever has a mind to be led astray, let him read Sir John Temple's (secretary to Ireton) stupid legend,—The Appeal of the Protestant Associations,—and Hume's Theatrical Description, who nevertheless reduces greatly the number, which could never amount to five or six thousand. He relates, that in hatred to the English, the Irish used to *wound their cows*, and in this torturing situation turn them into the woods to prolong their sufferings. In my opinion, under such a government as was then, they wanted more to eat them. And I am sorry that the gravity of the Historian has permitted Mr. Hume to rank *cows* amongst the *martyrs of religion*.

yourself. You would fain deprive us of the rights of mankind, for crimes we never committed ; for thoughts which we disclaim, and whereof the scrutineer and searcher of hearts is the only competent judge. Thus you imitate the tyrant, who put an inoffensive citizen to death, because in his uneasy slumbers, disturbed by the guilt of injuries offered to others, he dreamt that he was cutting his throat. Our actions are the best exponents of our sentiments. Our conduct is peaceable. But, as for you, your actions and conduct betray you, as the roaring, and impression of his claws, betray the lion. And woe to the game that is unprotected by the keeper ! In a enlightened age, when the cheerful eyes of philosophy and religion cannot bear the sight of frantic fanaticism, banished from all quarters of Europe, it found shelter among you, with its distorted features and numerous train of calamities and evils. Generous hosts ! and worthy of such a guest, you sheltered, you warmed, you gave new life, to a refugee entitled to your patronage. And as a prodigal child, thriving ill in foreign countries, you received him with the arms of a tender parent, you clad him in his *first robes*, you killed a fat calf, which the burning rafters of your neighbours houses have roasted, and at his reception the symphony of *pious raptures* was heard in your streets.

Whilst

Whilst in Ireland, the ministers of religion, in conformity to the gospel rule, were preaching love and benevolence; whilst in Ireland sixty thousand armed Protestants without any control but the great principles of honour, and valour, enemy to degenerate cruelty, were protecting the peaceable citizen and defenceless cottager, without any distinction of sects or parties; whilst the Irish Volunteers were setting to the world the rare examples of armed legions, without the severe subordination of military discipline, behaving with that noble decorum which precludes complaints, and attracts admiration,—*your* pulpits resounded with the harsh language of the Savage leader haranguing his warriors, and throwing down the hatchet as a signal of destruction to the *neighbouring tribes*. Some of your women, divested of tenderness and pity, so peculiar to the fair and delicate sex, reviving in their persons the savage sternness of the Spartan matrons urging on their sons to battle, rejoiced in the open day on seeing their neighbours houses in a blaze; and blessed God that they lived to see the day, when *Popish abominations* were purified with fire. One should imagine, that such of you as petitioned the king and parliament against granting a free trade to Ireland, should rest satisfied, without petitioning against your inoffensive

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five neighbours. If you glory in the purity of your religion, and in treading in the steps of its author, treat us as Christ himself would treat us, if he were on earth. He deprived no man of his property, nor of the indulgence and protection of the laws. If you glory in the purity of the Christian religion, call to mind that it suggests humility, and deference to people of superior power and judgment. Your king, your peers, and your commons, are deemed the first in dignity and wisdom : but I forget that you are well versed in the Bible, which says, " He " that is first amongst you, let him be the last." The scripture must be fulfilled. Take then the lead, and force them to trample on their own laws, and to banish their subjects.

Mention no longer " violation of faith with " heretics." You *violate* all the laws of civil society. In dissolving the ties of friendship, and pointing out your fellow subjects as the victims of legal severity, you split and rend the nation. You weaken its power, and trespass upon the respect due to your rulers, whom, instead of being the fathers of their people, you would fain force to become the heads of a faction.

You *violate* the sacred rights of nature. Her bountiful author declares, that ' he makes his ' sun shine on the good and bad.' The light of the

the sun, the brilliancy of the stars, the sweetness of the fruit, the balsamic effluvia of flowers, are dispensed with a liberal hand to the Heathen and Idolater. Must you deprive your neighbours of gifts common to all Adam's children, because they stick to a religion which all your forefathers professed, and which, if wrong, can hurt none but themselves?

In vain do you attempt to impose upon the public, with extracts of spurious canons, obsolete decrees, patches of councils, and legends of massacres, in order to fix a creed on us. The world knows that Roman Catholics sway the sceptre of authority in kingdoms and republics. The very nature then of civil society is a manifest contradiction to the creed you impute to us: for, if we are no more than machines veering at the breath of popes and priests, whom neither conscience, religion, the sacred ties of an oath, nor the fear of God's judgment, can restrain, patentees of guilt, and sure of impunity, we could not form a society, for the space of one year: for, in such a society, the notions of vice and virtue would be confounded; the blackest crimes and the purest virtue reduced to the same level; the discipline of morals destroyed; the harmony of the body politic dissolved, the brother armed against the brother;
and

and if, by a kind of miracle, in such a cursed number of men, a second Abel could be found, the earth would soon groan with the cries of his blood. If divines have attempted to demonstrate the existence of God from the nature of civil society, the very nature of civil society demonstrates the falsehood of the creed with which you compliment us. And, if the gloomy plan of such a horrid republic pleases your imaginations, go and lay the foundations of it, in some distant part of the earth. Be yourselves its members and governors; for no Christian could live there.

When the delicate pencils of the Gibbons, Reynals, and Marmontels, will paint the political scenery of the eighteenth century,——when on the extensive canvas, they will represent the gloom of long-reigning prejudice scattering, as the clouds of night, at the approach of the rising sun,——when they will paint the poniard, drenched in human blood, snatched from the hand of stern PERSECUTION,——the French praying in concert with the Americans,——the Armenians invited into Russia,——the order of Military Merit established in favour of Protestants, in the palace of a Catholic king,——Ireland rising from the sea, covered with her Fabii and Scipios, pointing their spears to distant shores, and holding forth the olive and sheaf of corn to their

their neighbours of all denominations,——when they will contrast the present to former times, ——shew the happy result of a change of system, —and prove that the world is refined,——You, painted in as frightful attitudes as the group of figures in Raphael's Judgment, with stern fanaticism in your countenances, a bible in one hand and a fagot in the other,——you, I say, will be an exception to the general rule: the world will read with surprise, that, in seventeen hundred and eighty, there have been fanatics in England and Scotland, that gave birth to so many illustrious writers. Your transactions shall be recorded in the appendix to the history of Jack Straw and Wat Tiler; and your chaplains and apologists shall be ranked with James Nailor and Hugh Peters.

And thus, Gentlemen, I finish my Apostrophe.

SHOULD Mr. Wesley, or any of his associators, think it worth their while to make any remarks on these letters, they cannot justly expect a rejoinder. They have started forth the unprovoked aggressors; and, not satisfied with attempting to deprive the Roman Catholics of their rights as subjects, they have slandered and aspersed their characters. I am no stranger to the ground on which they will attack me: either the rusty weapons of old councils, or a catalogue

talogue of old massacres, will be drawn out of their mouldering arsenals : arms as ill suited to the eighteenth century, as Saul's helmet was to David's head. I will be attacked with the council of Lateran, the wars of the Albigenſes, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, &c. I am a Chriſtian, and deny the tranſmigration of ſouls. I am nowiſe concerned in paſt tranſactions ; or if my religion be charged with them, I have in my hands the cruel arms of retaliation :—

I ſhall divide the charge into two branches, —barbarous actions, and barbarous doctrine. If Mr. Weſley reckons all thoſe who are not, or have not been, in communion with the ſee of Rome, in the number of heretics, and himſelf amongſt them, as doubtleſs he does, I ſhall then lay at his door, all the abominable and ſeditious doctrines taught by thoſe whom he ſtyles heretics, from the time of Simon the Magician, down to our days,—the impurities of the Gnoſtics ; the enchantments of the Ophites ; the perjury and frauds of the Priſcillianiſts ; the errors of the Albigenſes, and millions beſides. If, from theſe diſtant times, I make a tranſition to a nearer æra, I ſhall prove to him, from the works, not only of insignificant writers of the reformed religion, but of the very founders of the reformation, who aſſumed as much power over their followers, as the pope aſſumes over

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the

the Catholics, that they taught doctrines cruel, immoral, and seditious; and that the most horrid barbarities were committed in consequence of those doctrines. Calvin not only commits heretics to the flames, but moreover writes a book in justification of his proceedings: and in his commentaries on the scriptures, he teaches, that “*Usury** is lawful.” Luther, Malancthon, and Bucer, have authorized polygamy, and permitted a prince to marry a second wife during the life of the first. The decrees of the synod of Dort, caused great persecutions in Holland. Knox and his followers propagated the gospel with fire and sword. I have already mentioned the doctrine of John Hufs, and his master Wickliff, so inimical to sovereigns.

If I take a review of the greatest champions who, within these four hundred years, have undertaken the Herculean task of overthrowing the kingdom of Antichrist, I see them all claiming a mission from Heaven, as well as Mr. Wesley,

* In the news-paper this word is made *venery*, by an error of the Press, which Mr. O’Leary alludes to, at the conclusion; and for which, and some other errors of smaller note, the printer made the following apology:

“The printer assures Mr. O’Leary, that the errors of the press, which he complains of, were not occasioned by any design or wilful neglect, but by the lateness of the night, and the hurry unavoidably attendant on news-paper publications.”

Wesley, and still overturning thrones and empires. I see Germany deluged with oceans of blood; boors headed by fanatical preachers, promising the deluded multitude to receive the bullets in their sleeves, attacking their princes and sovereigns; taylors paving their way to the throne over heaps of mangled carcasses, in order to re-establish the *kingdom of Jerusalem*; *apostles* heading armies, and commanding, by their last will, their dearly-beloved children reformed from the *errors of Popery*, to make a drum* of their skins, in order to rouse the saints to battle; the streets of London ensanguined with the gore of peaceable citizens, destroyed by the fifth-monarchy men, proclaiming king Jesus; communion-tables stained with the blood of Protestant bishops; scaffolds reeking with the blood of Protestant kings; solemn leagues and covenants sealed for the extirpation of Papists and Malignants†, and entered into with as much eagerness as Annibal entered Italy, after swearing the destruction of the Romans, upon the Carthaginian altars; the poniard lifted by the hand of religious madness, and committing such slaughter and carnage, that people propose the disagreeable and odious problem, "Whether religion has been of greater use
" than harm to mankind?"

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Still

* Zisca, a follower of John Huss.

† A name given to the Protestants of the established church.

Still I am inclined to exculpate religion from the blame of calamities which can be traced back to the rage of fanatical preachers, the cruelty of governors, the policy and craft of ministers of state, as to their genuine sources. "Matters were first embroiled in the cabinet," says Rousseau, "and then the leading men" "stirred up the common people in the name" "of God."

In the midst of this religious rage, I see humanity asserting her right, and resuming her empire: I see Catholic governors refusing to comply with the imperious mandates of a cruel king, and a no-less cruel queen, at the time of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and Catholic bishops saving all the Protestants in their dioceses: I see in Ireland, the great Protestant bishop Bedel with his clans, and thousands, in the free exercise of their religion, in the midst of a Catholic army, whilst a Protestant bishop bleeds at the foot of a communion-table in Scotland, for reading the English liturgy:— Thus, I am convinced that people of all denominations would be happy together, if their clergy recommended mutual love and benevolence; and that, if we divested ourselves of passion, religion would never arm the hand with the poniard. If Innocent the third excommunicated the heretics of his time, Innocent the

the eleventh entered into a league with Protestant kings.

Thus, gentlemen, you see how the world changes. On the wide theatres spread by the revolutions of time, new characters daily appear, and different circumstances are productive of different events. It is in vain to ransack old councils, imperial constitutions, and ecclesiastical canons, whether genuine or spurious, against heretics, in order to brand the present generation of Catholics. In the very city, I mean Rome, where the general council of Lateran was held, Protestants are caressed, and live with ease and comfort. Travellers agree, that it is the theatre of civility, benevolence and politeness. In the German empire, where, by the constitutions of Frederic the Second, heretics were condemned to the stake, all religions enjoy full liberty. In some places, the Catholic priest and Calvinist minister officiate in the same church, and bishoprics are alternately governed by Catholic and Protestant prelates. All laws, whether civil or ecclesiastical, are done away by time, when the motives that gave them rise subsist no longer. And none but a slave to bigotry and prejudice will confound the eighteenth with the thirteenth century. Because Father Roger Bacon was imprisoned as a forcerer, on account of his extensive knowledge in astronomy,

my, perspective, &c. or that Gallileo's doctrine of the motion of the earth was condemned by a numerous tribe of divines, headed by seven Cardinals, under the eyes of the Roman pontiff, must it be obtruded on the public, that the Roman Catholics must consider the motion of the earth round the sun, *as heresy*? or firmly believe that there is magic or witchcraft in the *Camera obscura*, because father Bacon, who described it, was seven years confined in prison? Hence from the opinions of men, or the actions of popes, or the disciplinary canons of councils, or the proceedings of bishops who composed them, in one age, there is no arguing to the belief of men in another. Popes have attempted to absolve subjects from their allegiance to their sovereigns: it is no more an article of my belief that they could do it by the authority of the keys, than it is an article of my belief, that I can strike a king on the cheek, because Calvin teaches, that, "Earthly princes abdicate their authority when they erect themselves against God," and that "we ought rather spit in their faces, than obey them."* Mr. Wesley and the *Association* would do well to analyse some of that doctor's writings, and Knox's sermons, and to insert them in their Appeal, as a contrast to the obsolete canons which they have extracted

* Calvin in Daniel, chap. 6. v. 22.

extracted from Sir Richard Steele's appendix:—
Erect themselves against God, is a phrase meerly spiritual, and of a fatal tendency, because the broachers of such doctrines think it a sufficient plea against kings not inclined to receive the *truths*, they themselves are prompted to preach; and as every one thinks himself in the right, error has many chances for the sword of authority.

If empire be founded in grace, and not in the rights of nature, or the laws of civil society; if a deviation from the immutable truth that saw the world in its cradle, and is to preside at its dissolution, be a plea against kings; let them be eternally armed with the scales of the Leviathan, against the barbed irons to which they are exposed, from those who think themselves the only persons enlightened with the rays of gospel knowledge. Nothing then is to be apprehended from popes. Less is to be apprehended from spurious canons, or the *memory* of councils which gave up the *ghost* six hundred years ago. And any inference from the proceedings of the fathers of the council of Lateran, or obsolete texts of the canon law, against former heretics, to alarm the Protestants of our days, is the fruit of ignorance or malice, or both.—The Protestants of our days sway the sceptre of authority. Kingdoms and republics, laws and institutions, fœderal unions, and civil compacts, blessings

blessings in peace, and triumphs in war, the allegiance of their subjects, and protection the result of allegiance, record them in the annals of fame, and put them on the same level with the Cæsars to whom tribute and submission are due. How are they connected with the motley rabble of heretics, who appeared and disappeared in former times, overturning and attacking church and state, and attacked by both in their turn. No state acknowledged their power. No band of civil union linked them together;—no subjects swore allegiance to them;—no Catholic recognized a king, parliament, or magistrate amongst the Albigenes, whom people dignify with the title of Protestants; and whom Protestant powers would consider as the pest and bane of society, if such were now in their dominions. Disciples of the Manicheans, they admitted two supreme and independent principles; and granted two wives, called Colla and Colliba, to the God of Truth. Had their doctrine been confined to meer speculations, in an age more enlightened than the thirteenth century, when the council of Lateran was held, in all appearance, humanity would pity them, and philosophy would smile at their errors.

But this wild theory was still surpassed by the most monstrous practices. They considered marriage as a state of perdition; but chastity was not one of their vows.

More

More could be said; but I am afraid that my readers already blush: and whoever dignifies the Albigenſes with the title of Proteſtants, in order to inflame the rage, and kindle the rancour of fellow-ſubjects, by a recital of the ill treatment of thoſe pretended martyrs, ſhould not only bluſh, but hide himſelf.

Let none imagine, that whatever is mentioned in the ſeſſions of a general council, is an article of faith. There are decrees of diſcipline which are at the diſcretion of kingdoms or provinces either to reject or adopt. There are articles of faith which, in our opinion, neither time, place, or circumſtances can alter. Thus, the council of Trent which commands the Roman Catholics under pain of *anathema*, or curſe, to believe the neceſſity of baptiſm and the reality of original ſin, is univerſally received in all Catholic countries, as far as it confines itſelf to the deciſion of ſpeculative points, and propoſes them as articles of belief: but, where the ſame council decrees, that the manor or land on which a duel is fought, with the connivance of the owner, ſhould be confiscated and applied to pious uſes, it is rejected. Though the motive of the decree is laudable, as it tends to ſuppreſs vice and reſtrain the paſſions: yet, as the means, ſuch as the forfeiture of lands, &c. are quite

quite out of the spiritual line, this decree of discipline is not received. By the same rule, two things are to be considered relative to the council of Lateran, often quoted, and as often misapplied. The fathers of that council have anathematized the errors of the Albigenses so repugnant to reason, morality, and the principles of revealed religion, and every similar error extolling itself against the orthodox faith. So far they confined themselves within the limits of their spiritual provinces, and so far every Roman Catholic submits to their decrees. But when they proceeded further, and granted the lands of the persons whom they condemned as *heretics*, to the Catholics who would take possession of them,* no Roman Catholic is concerned in a verdict that disposes of temporal property : for, neither popes nor councils have been appointed as the supreme and *infallible* arbiters of succession to thrones, the transfer of property, or temporal affairs, by Him who refused to compromise matters between two brothers, and declared, that *his kingdom is not of this world*. Nor is it to be presumed, that the ambassadors who assisted at the council, would betray the
interests

* The author speaks in the supposition of the genuineness of the decree. For it is spurious, as well as the second decree about safe-conducts attributed to the Council of Constance, and which L'Enfant asserts to have been found in a manuscript in the Vienna library.

interests of their kings, who often excepted against the competency of spiritual tribunals, as to the decision of temporal rights. And as to the distinction between articles of faith, and canons of discipline, we find it even in the New Testament.—

The same apostles, who preached the divinity of Christ, which we all believe, decreed in a council, that the Christians should abstain from the use of blood, and the flesh of strangled animals.* We believe the doctrine they preached: we overlook the discipline they established, because the prohibition was temporary. The Doctrine is permanent: opinions are fugitive: laws, discipline and decrees vary with time. We are but little concerned in the transactions of the twelfth or thirteenth century. We are a new world raised on the ruins of the former, and if hitherto we could not agree as Christians, *it is high time to live together as men*. If speculative errors be punishable, there is a day of reckoning: and eternity is long enough for *retribution*. But during the short span of life, checkered with so many anxious cares, let us not resemble those savages who glory in dispeopling the earth, and carrying the mangled heads of their fellow-creatures on the tops of their reeking spears, as so many trophies of their barbarous victory.

* Acts, 15th chap.

victory. In vain do we give ourselves up to hatred and vengeance. We soon discover that such cruel pleasure was never adapted to the heart of man : that in hating others we punish ourselves ; that humanity disclaims violence ; and that the law of God, in commanding us to love our neighbour, has consulted the most upright and reasonable dictates of the human heart. The world is tired of religious disputes, and it is high time for you, Gentlemen, to be tired of me.

It is time to agree to a truce, and leave the field to such champions as are willing to engage in national, and political contests, infinitely more useful to the public, than the *bread-fpun* arguments of polemical divinity, decrees of councils, or obsolete canons.

Should any of the champions of the eighty-five legions of Glasgow, or any of their allies and confederates sound the trumpet, I shall not prepare myself for battle. If I attempted to throw fanaticism into ridicule, they are welcome to discharge at me arrows repositied in the quivers of the *Spanish Friar*, and the *Duenna*. Of what use is it to the public, if I have recourse to *Chrysal*, or, the *Adventures of a Guinea*, where our modern apostles are taken off in the conference between *Momus* and *Mother Brimstone*.

If

If the attack be serious, the weapons will be taken from the mouldering arsenals of old councils, popes decrees, and obsolete canons. There it will be a repetition of the same thing, *for ever and for aye*, to use the words of old Robin Hood. But should Mr. Wesley, or W. A. D—mm—d, or any apostle belonging to the *eighty five societies*, intend to be of use to the public, I shall co-operate with their pious endeavours, with all the veins in my heart.

We have obtained of late the privilege of planting tobacco in Ireland, and our tobacco-nists want paper. Let Mr. Wesley then come with me, as the *curate* and *barber* went to *shave* and *bless* the library of Don Quixote. All the old books, old canons, sermons, and so forth, tending to kindle feuds, or promote rancour, let us fling them out at the windows. Society will lose nothing. The tobacco-nist will benefit by the spoils of *antiquity*. And if, upon mature deliberation, we decree that Mr. Wesley's Journal, and his apology for the Association's *Appeal*, should share the same fate with the old buckrams, we will procure them a gentle fall. After having rocked ourselves in the large and hospitable cradle of the Free-press, where the peer and the commoner, the priest and the alderman, the friar and swaddler, can stretch themselves at full length, provided they

they be not too churlish, let us laugh at those who breed useless quarrels, and set to the world the bright example of toleration and benevolence.

A peaceable life and happy death to all Adam's children! May the ministers of religion of every denomination, whether they pray at the head of their congregations in embroidered vestments, or black gowns, short coats, grey locks, powdered wigs, or black curls, instead of enflaming the rabble, and inspiring their hearers with hatred and animosity for their fellow creatures, recommend love, peace, and harmony!

In my universal prayer, gentlemen, let me not forget the compositor, who, in Tuesday's paper, made me fix a false doctrine upon Calvin. Instead of *Calvin taught that usury is lawful*, he makes me say, *Calvin taught that venery is lawful*; and, instead of saying, *Hence from the opinions of men, or the actions of popes, &c. in one age, there is no arguing to the belief of men in another*; instead of *arguing*, he makes me say *agreeing*.

Thus, by the transposition of types, and change of words, a compositor has more magic than Circe, who metamorphosed Ulysses' crew into wild beasts. For compositors can
change

change an old Usurer into a young Venus,—
usury into *venery*, and a wrangling *argument*
into a cordial *agreement* ! God grant him more
exactness in printing this; and grant your-
selves and the whole world, peace, health, and
prosperity, and grant the curious searchers of
old books, more humanity, and less contro-
versy.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

your most affectionate,

and humble servant,

ARTHUR O'LEARY.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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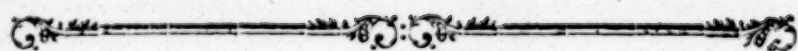
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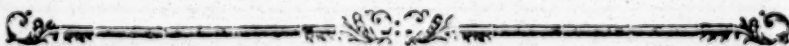
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REJOINDER

TO

MR. WESLEY'S REPLY.



R E J O I N D E R

T O

MR. WESLEY'S REPLY.

THE following extract from Locke's letter on toleration, together with Mr. Wesley's reply, has been sent to the author, with a request to answer it, *if in his power*, says the writer of the letter. Mr. Locke in a profound manner opens the gate of toleration to all mortals, who do not entertain any principles injurious to the rights of civil society : but my correspondent is surpris'd that such an impartial writer should make an oblique charge on the Roman Catholics, if it were not grounded on truth.

“ WE cannot find any sect that teaches expressly and openly, that men are not obliged to keep their promise; that princes may be dethroned by those that differ from them in religion, or that the dominion of all things belongs only to themselves.——But nevertheless we find those, that say the same thing in other

U 2 “ words.

“ words. What else do they mean who teach,
“ that faith is not to be kept with heretics?
“ What can be the meaning of their asserting
“ that kings, excommunicated, forfeit their
“ crowns and kingdoms? — That dominion
“ is founded in grace, is an assertion by which
“ those that maintain it, do plainly lay a claim
“ to the possession of all things. — I say, these
“ have no right to be tolerated by the magis-
“ trate.”

Again : “ That church can have no right to
“ be tolerated by the magistrate, which is con-
“ stituted upon such a bottom, that all those
“ who enter into it, do thereby, ipso facto, deli-
“ ver themselves up to the protection and ser-
“ vice of another prince : for by this means the
“ magistrate would give way to the setting up
“ of a foreign jurisdiction in his own country,
“ and suffer his own people to be enlisted, as it
“ were, for soldiers against his own govern-
“ ment. Nor does the frivolous and fallacious
“ distinction, between the court and the church,
“ afford any remedy to this inconvenience ; ef-
“ pecially, when both the one and the other,
“ are equally subject to the absolute authority of
“ the same person ; who has not only power to
“ persuade the members of his Church to what-
“ ever he lists, either as purely religious, or as in
“ order

“ order thereunto, but also can enjoin it them,
“ on pain of eternal fire.

“ It is ridiculous for any one to profess himself
“ to be a Mahometan only in his religion; but
“ in every thing else a faithful subject to a Chris-
“ tian magistrate, whilst at the same time, he
“ acknowledges himself bound to yield blind
“ obedience to the Musti of Constantinople;
“ who himself is entirely obedient to the Otto-
“ man emperor, and frames the feigned oracles
“ of that religion according to his pleasure. But
“ this Mahometan, living amongst Christians,
“ would yet more apparently renounce their
“ government, if he acknowledged the same
“ person, to be head of his church, who is the
“ supreme magistrate in the state.”

Locke on toleration, p. 59.

MR. O'LEARY'S

MR. OLEARY'S ANSWER.

MR. Locke's *supposed principles* are fully answered in "Loyalty asserted." With every respect due to so great a man, he has totally mistaken the Catholics creed. He was born at a time when the nice hand of the legislature had not drawn the line between their real and imputed principles. And the prejudices of education often tinge a philosopher's imagination with the colours of deception. "That the dominion of all things belongs to the saints," was the doctrine of Wickliff, Hufs, and the English regicides in the time of Charles the first: a doctrine condemned by the council of Constance, in thirtieth proposition extracted from Hufs's writings.

Mr. Locke, in shutting the gates of toleration against the professors of such a doctrine, fully justifies the emperor Sigismund in putting Hufs to death: as that unhappy man not only preached, but practised it. In matters more within the verge of his knowledge, I widely differ from Mr. Locke. When he denies any innate ideas, or the least notion of a God implanted in our souls, independent of the senses, I prefer the Cartesian philosophers, messieurs de Portroyal, the bishop of Rochester, and several others

others who were of a different opinion. But, when he supposes that “ the same person who
“ is head of the church, is the supreme magis-
“ trate in the state; that the pope can frame
“ the feigned oracles of Catholic religion, as
“ the Musli can frame them for the Turks, by
“ the direction of the Ottoman emperor; that
“ he can persuade the members of his church
“ to whatever he lists, and enjoin it them, on
“ pain of eternal fire,” &c. I pity a man misled by popular error.

The universities of Paris, Valentia, Toulouse, Poitiers, Bourdeaux, Bourges, Rheims, Caen, &c. that is to say, the oracles of the doctrine taught in their respective countries, knew their creed better than an English philosopher could teach them. They have stigmatized those assertions obtruded on the public by Mr. Locke; and, in condemnation of Santorellus, who asserted that the pope could depose kings guilty of *heresy*, qualify his doctrine as “ new, false,
“ erroneous, contrary to the word of God, calculated to bring an odium on the see of
“ Rome, to impair the supreme civil authority
“ that depends on God alone, and to disturb
“ the public tranquillity.”

Such is the doctrine of Catholics; and had Mr. Locke read history, or been candid enough

to acknowledge it, he would have found the practice of the Catholics, in all ages, conformable to the decision.

“ The pope can persuade the members of his church to what he lists, and enjoin it them, on pain of eternal fire.” Doubtless! He can *persuade* me to kill my mother, and enjoin it me, on *pain of fire*. He can *persuade* me that I eat my victuals with the big toe of my left foot; or that John Locke’s mother was a virgin, when she was delivered of the author of the “ Essay on human understanding.”

Still the pope could not *persuade* the English Catholics to give their benefices to Italian incumbents, in the time of Richard the second, nor *dissuade* a Catholic parliament from introducing the *premunire*, against provisions obtained at the *court* of Rome; an evident proof that they knew the distinction between the *church* and the *court*. Pope Boniface VIII. could not *persuade* the Catholics of his time to believe that he was lord paramount of all the kingdoms of the earth; nor *dissuade* the king of France from writing the following letter to him: “ We would have your Madness know, that we acknowledge no superior in temporals but God alone.”

Pius

Pius the Fifth, and Sixtus Quintus, in publishing their bulls of deposition against queen Elizabeth, * and absolving her subjects from their allegiance, could not *persuade* the Catholics of England, to rise up in arms against their sovereign, though they were superior in numbers, and had room to expect every assistance.

Two proofs which will ever stand upon record, that Catholics never hold difference in religion, as a sufficient plea for dethroning kings; nor a pope's bull a sufficient cause, for withdrawing their allegiance.

In the dark ages, popes were deposed by the council of Constance; and John the twenty-second, who preached up the Millenarian doctrine, and held that souls do not enjoy the clear sight of God until after the resurrection, could not *persuade* the *members of his church* to believe him; nor *dissuade* the university of Paris from censuring a doctrine, which the *head of their church* preached from the pulpit at Avignon, and which he himself retracted before a notary public, and several witnesses in his last sickness; nor *dissuade* a French king from writing this short letter to him, “Retraete, on je te
“ferai

* Such proceedings are accounted for in *Loyalty Asserted*, in the discussion of the deposing power.

“ferai ardre,”—retract or I will get you burned. An evident proof that the pope cannot “persuade the members of his church, to “what he lists: nor enjoin it them on pain of “eternal fire.”

For the honour of Locke’s memory, let my correspondent throw the fifty-ninth page of his treatise on toleration into the *fire*; for it is a jumble of nonsense. He argues from false principles taken up without examination.

All the popes bulls from the time of St. Peter, to the end of ages, cannot make an article of faith for Roman Catholics, without the acceptance of the Universal Church, and the church has no power over the temporals of kings, much less to command any thing against the laws of God.

Catholics never follow an arbitrary doctrine. The standard is fixed. The boundaries are prescribed, and the pope himself cannot remove them. They consider him as the head pastor of the church. Subordination in every society, requires pre-eminence in its rulers. But his will is not their creed.

As to Mr. Wesley. His reply to me is little more than a repetition of his first letter. He denies “that he himself, or his followers, were
“ever

“ever persecuted.” For the truth I appeal to his own conscience. I appeal to his “Farther appeal” to men of reason and religion, wherein he describes the sufferings of several of his followers in England; how he himself was dragged by the mob; and the proceedings of a magistrate who dispersed a pamphlet, entitled, “A parallel between the Papists and Methodists,” in order to kindle the rage of the populace against him. I appeal to the letter he wrote, many years ago, to doctor Bailey of Cork, wherein he complains that the grand jury of that city found indictments against Charles Wesley, who makes the hymns, and ordered him to be transported as a vagabond. Mr. Wesley has got the letter printed, with the names of the grand jury. But, after having weathered the storm, the mariner on shore forgets his distresses as well as his sea-chart.

To shew that *his friend*, John Hufs, never “kindled any civil wars in Bohemia, and that “he was quite innocent of any offence what-ever;” he quotes the following testimonial, given to John Hufs, by the bishop of Nazareth. “We Nicholas, do, by these presents, make “known unto all men, that we often talked “with that honourable man, John Hufs; and “in all his sayings, doings, and behaviour, “have

“ have found him to be a faithful man ; finding
“ no manner of evil, sinister or erroneous do-
“ ings in him, unto these presents.” To this
Mr. Wesley subjoins, a testimonial from the
archbishop of Prague ; declaring, “ that he
“ knew not that John Hufs was culpable or
“ faulty in any crime or offence whatsoever.”

Let us now suppose those testimonials to be genuine, and grant them to Mr. Wesley to get rid of a bad cause. What advantage can he derive from them? The bishop of Nazareth declares, that he *talked* very often with John Hufs, and that in their conversation, he *discovered* nothing sinister or erroneous in him. Doubtless, in conversing with a bishop who was an Inquisitor, John Hufs was upon his guard. The archbishop “ knew not that he “ was culpable.” The conversation of the first, and the *know not* of the other, must counterbalance the positive and decisive proofs, produced on a criminal’s trial, in presence of a general council, no ways interested in the condemnation of a man, in whom there “ was no “ evil, nothing sinister or erroneous !” Testimonials are often granted to people from tenderness, or ignorance, which will avail but little on a trial.

The thirtieth proposition, extracted from Hufs’s works, and condemned by the council,
runs

runs thus : " There is no temporal lord, there
" is no pope, no bishop, when he is in the state
" of mortal sin." Hufs himself acknowledged
this seditious proposition, which authorizes the
fanatical saint to take the king's crown, if he
sees him but once drunk : or to seize the pro-
perty of the lord of the manor, if, in scolding
his coachman, he curses. The fruits of this
doctrine were as visible in Bohemia, as the
fruits of Mr. Wesley's Apology for the associa-
tions, are legible in the glowing embers of
London !

L'Enfant, the Calvinist historian of the coun-
cil of Constance, better informed than Mr.
Wesley, can instruct him in these words :
" John Hufs, by his sermons and writings, and
" violent and outrageous conduct, had ex-
" tremely contributed to the troubles which
" then distracted Bohemia."*

What becomes now of testimonials which
carry contradiction on the very face of them,
whereas John Hufs was excommunicated a
year and a half before he obtained them ?
Those bishops, then, must have been mistaken
if their testimonials be genuine. Each of them
must have been the Burnet of his days ; of
whom Protestant as well as Catholic historians
remark,

* L'Enfant, B. 3. No. 57.

remark, that he is never to be believed less, than when he relates facts, of which he pretends to have been an ocular witness.

Mr. Wesley denies that "John Hufs ever attempted to make his escape." He may deny his own journals. Dacher and Reichen-thal, two German historians, present at the council, and on whom L'Enfant passes the highest encomiums for candour and integrity, relate that John Hufs attempted to make his escape. Here he violated his safe-conduct, and forced his judges to confine him. L'Enfant exhausts his wit, to invalidate the relation of those, (according to himself,) "unprejudiced historians." His chief reasons are, "the silence of the acts of the council about Hufs's flight." To this it is answered, that in the acts of a council, the judicial acts done in full council, are alone related; not every incident that happens in a city where it is held. Hence Hufs's imprisonment is not mentioned. Jerome of Prague's flight is mentioned, because the council sent him a safe-conduct, and the cause required to be specified. Secondly, he says that "it appears that Hufs was apprehended on the twenty-eighth of November; and consequently could not escape in the following March." Besides other reasons, it can be answered that the mistake of a date, often owing to the fault of copiers or printers, cannot

not invalidate the truth of a public fact attested by such ocular witnesses, as L'Enfant describes the two German historians to have been.

But Mr. Wesley insists, that "the emperor Sigismund granted Hufs a safe-conduct, promising him impunity, in case he was found guilty." I explained the nature of safe-conducts, in my Remarks on that gentleman's letters: and I insist that safe-conducts of the kind are never granted. It is enough for sovereigns to extend the mercy of prerogative to criminals, when they are found guilty by their judges; without saying to a rebel, or an incendiary, or to a highwayman: "Go and take your trial: never fear: I will grant you your pardon, when you are found guilty, though I am convinced you are an arrant rogue." They never enter into compacts of the kind with such people. A man who is to take his trial, and has enemies in the way, may call for a safe-conduct to go to the place of trial, and return unmolested, if he is acquitted: and this was the case of Hufs. He offered of himself to take his trial, and to submit to the sentence, if found guilty. He never upbraided the emperor with his breach of promise, when he was given up to the secular arm; which he would have done, had the emperor given him such an assurance. The Hussites themselves went, on the
faith

faith of a safe-conduct, to the council of Basil, and never alleged breach of faith with John Hufs.

It was, then, in the sixteenth century, when interested men fomented divisions between Catholics and Protestants, that the hand of calumny wrote false commentaries on the text of the canon of the council of Constance; and handed it down as a theme to religious declaimers, whom the test of orthodoxy proposed by the very council, *will ever stare in the face*.

Here is the test inserted in a bull pulished with the approbation of a general council, not by the pope in his personal capacity, but *sacro approbante concilio*. “Let the person suspected be asked, Whether he or she does not think that all wilful perjury, committed upon any occasion whatsoever, for the preservation of one’s life, or another man’s, or even for the sake of the faith, is a mortal sin?”

I have read near upon a thousand *religious* declamations against *popery*: not one of the authors of those invectives has candour or honour to produce that test in favour of Catholics: which shews the spirit that actuates them. They should, at least, imitate the limner who first painted Pope’s Essay on Man, and contrasted,

contrasted, on the same canvas, the blooming cheek with the frightful skeleton, linked together in the same group. No. They will paint the Catholic religion in profile, and fix a Saracen's cheek into the face of the Christian. The declaration of a general council, which can afford the least occasion for cavil, will be eternally held forth, whilst the decrees of the same council, liable to no misconstruction, where fraud and perjury, even for the sake of religion, are condemned, will be overlooked. Beljarmin, Becanus, and those other Knoxes and Buchanans of the Catholic religion, whose works are burned by the hands of the executioner in Catholic countries, are dragged from their shelves, whilst the decisions of the most learned universities in the world, that condemned the false doctrine of those incendiaries, are buried in silence. The bee pitches on flowers: but the beetle falls upon nuisances.

They will be eternally teasing their hearers and readers with the word *heretic*, without explaining its sense or acceptation. They will erect it as a kind of standard to which all the fanatics of the world will flock to fight the battles of the Lord against Antichrist: and in this confederate army, they will confound the archbishop of Cashel, who fills his see after a long succession of Protestant bishops, with John Huss, who starts up on a sudden, flying in the faces of kings and bishops. They will con-

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found

found the bishop of Cork, with Theodorus Sartor, stretching himself naked before a number of prophets and prophetesses, who burn their clothes and run naked through the streets of Amsterdam, denouncing their woes, and foretelling the destruction of Antichrist. They will put the archbishop of Canterbury on a level with the Patarini, who exclaimed against Popery, and held that no sin could be committed with the lower parts of the body.

In fine, all those monsters that started up from time to time, and whom our magistrates would doom to the rope or fagot, are made good Protestants, because they exclaimed against Popery: an enumeration of their sufferings from Papists, is enlarged upon; and the Protestant bishop, or the Protestant king has no mercy to expect from Papists: for sure they are held in the same light, by them, with James Nailer, who, after fighting against Papists and Malignants, in Cromwell's army, turned prophet, and rode into Bristol, mounted on an ass, on a Palm Sunday, attended with numbers of women, spreading their aprons before him, and making the air re-echo to loud hosannahs: "Holy, holy, holy; hosannah to James Nailer: "blessed is James Nailer, who comes in the "name of the Lord!"* Those gentlemen never mention *heretics* excommunicated by Protestant

* Swell's life of James Nailer.

testant churches, and put to death by Protestant magistrates. They never mention the description given of *heretics* by Protestant writers; by Godolphin, the Protestant canonist, and sir Edward Coke, the Protestant lawyer, who both call heresy, "*lepram animæ*"—the leprosy of the soul. No. Heresy is the Papist's favourite theme. No Protestant ever made any commentaries on it.

The same uncandid fallacy that lurks under the word *heretic*, with which the Catholics are always taunted, is manifest in the strained construction of the canon of the council of Constance. A spiritual cause is to be tried by ecclesiastical judges. They declare that "no safe-conduct granted by princes, shall hinder heretics from being judged and punished," (with ecclesiastical censures and degradation, for their power to punish can extend no farther) "and that when the person who has promised them security" (from this ecclesiastical punishment, for no other can be meant by a spiritual tribunal) "has done all that is in his power to do, shall not, in this case," (the case of securing from a spiritual or ecclesiastical punishment inflicted by a lawful superior) "be obliged to keep his promise:" because a promise of the kind, made to one of their rebellious clergymen, who corrupts and falsifies their doctrine, is an unjust usurpation of their rights, and subversive of their spiritual jurisdiction.

And an unjust promise, injurious to the rights of another, is not binding, let the tie be what it will. Herod promised upon oath to give his daughter whatever she would ask for. He was not bound to give her the head of John the Baptist. If the king of England, without even depriving a single man of his estate, bound himself by oath, to arrogate to himself the legislative as well as the executive power; every antagonist of popery, from the prelate down to the tub-preacher, would cry out, with the fathers of the council of Constance: "He is not, " in this case, obliged to keep his promise."

In this sense, the canon of the council is to be understood. In this sense, the fathers themselves, the best interpreters of their own meaning, understood it. In this sense, the Catholic doctors, all over the world, understand it: they who are more competent judges of their own creed, than either Mr. Locke or Mr. Wesley. Such of them as are of opinion, that the supreme power of the state can make *heresy* a capital crime, rise up with indignation against the false accusers who say that the council authorised breach of faith with *heretics*. They write in Catholic states where they have nothing to fear, and less to expect, from Mr. Wesley and his London rioters.

If Mr. Wesley construes this canon in a different sense, it is no reason for obtruding his
tortured

tortured construction on me, as an article of orthodoxy. An Arian may as well persuade the public, that I do not believe in the Divinity of Christ, because he does not believe in it himself, and tortures the scriptures in support of his errors. John Hufs was a priest, ordained in the Church of Rome, and said mass until the day of his confinement. I suppose Mr. Wesley will not allow, that a temporal prince could deprive his spiritual superiors from censuring and degrading him, if found guilty of an erroneous doctrine.

Every church claims to herself the power of inflicting spiritual *punishments* independent of the civil magistrate—The church of Rome, the consistories of Scotland, and all others. When the council of two hundred arrogated to themselves, the power of denouncing and absolving from censures, and in consequence intended to absolve one Bertelier, Calvin ascended the pulpit, and, with outstretched hands, threatened to oppose force to force; exclaimed with vehemence of voice against the profanation, and forced the senate to resign their spiritual commission. Bertelier was *punished* in spite of the *promise of the civil power*. When Mr. Wesley refused the sacrament to Mrs. Williamson in Georgia, for opposing the *propagation* of the gospel, in giving the preference to Mr. Williamson, the layman, at a time when the clergyman intended to light Hymen's torch with a *spark of grace*: a conflict
of

of jurisdiction between the clergy and laity was the result. Mr. Wesley was indicted; and the following warrant, copied by himself into his journal was issued.

“GEORGIA. SAVANNAH. ff.

“To all constables, tything men, and others
“whom these may concern.

“You and each of you are hereby required to
“take the body of John Wesley, clerk, &c.
“&c. &c. Signed, Th. Christie.”

“Tuesday, the ninth,” says Mr. Wesley, Mr. Jones, the constable, carried me before Mr. Bailiff Parker and Mr. Recorder. My answer to them was—that the giving or refusing the Lord’s supper being a matter purely ecclesiastical, I could not acknowledge their power to interrogate me upon it.* If Mr. Wesley, then, thought himself justifiable in pleading the clerical privilege, let him not blame the fathers of Constance, for declaring their right to *punish* with ecclesiastical censures and degradation, one of their own subjects, in spite of any safe-conduct granted by the civil power; especially at a time when this superiority over their own clergy, was confirmed to the bishops by the laws of the empire, with which Sigismund could no more dispense

* See this whole affair in Mr. Wesley’s Journal of the year 1737, p. 43. Bristol printed by Felix Farley.

pense at that time, than James the second could in his.

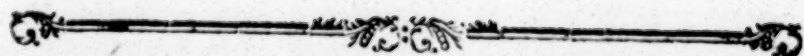
“ But,” says Mr. Wesley, “ sure Hufs would “ not have come to Constance, had he foreseen “ the consequence.” That regarded himself. Ob-
stinate persons seldom think themselves in error. Strange instances of this obstinacy can be met with in the trials of the regicides : some of whom declared, at the hour of death, that they gloried in having a hand in the king’s death, and would cheerfully play over the same tragedy. We have a more recent instance of this obstinacy, in one of Mr. Wesley’s martyrs. Scarcely could the Protestant clergyman prevail on one of the rioters, who had been very active in plundering the city of London, last year, to take the blue cockade out of his hat, in going to the gallows. He cried out that he died a martyr to the Protestant religion. We have daily instances of people giving themselves up to take their trial, who are disappointed, without any imputation on their judges.

Jerome of Prague, who maintained the same error with Hufs, came to Constance, after his confrere’s execution. The council sent him a safe-conduct, with this express clause : “ salvo “ *jure concilii*”—reserving to the council its right to judge you. He came : and the council judged and *punished* him with degradation, as it had
done

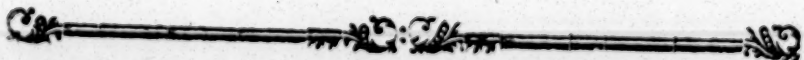
done with regard to Hufs; and left him to the secular arm: as Calvin, queen Elizabeth, and king James I. did to the *heretics* whom their consistories and bishops had judged and found guilty of *heretical pravity*. “But was not the emperor Sigismund cruel in putting those two men to death?” It is not his lenity or cruelty that we examine. I only vindicate myself and the Catholic Church from a slanderous doctrine. He was not more cruel for putting seditious men, one of whom had committed wilful murder, to death, than Protestant sovereigns who doomed old women to the stake, for a kind of gibberish about the incarnation. My sentiments on that subject I have explained.

Jerome of Prague’s coming to the council, shews that it did not violate faith with John Hufs. Neither doth any one accuse the council of violating faith with Jerome. They were both more obstinate than Mr. Wesley, who ran away from the bailiffs of Georgia, and would not return to them. In this he followed Sancho’s maxim: “Many go to the market for wool, that come home shorn.”

ARTHUR O’LEARY.



A N
E S S A Y
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T O L E R A T I O N :
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F O R
L I B E R T Y O F C O N S C I E N C E .



A N
E S S A Y
O N
T O L E R A T I O N.

THE INTRODUCTION.

MY design, in the following pages, is—to throw open the gates of civil toleration for all Adam's children, whose principles are not inconsistent with the peace of civil society, or subversive of the rules of morality; to wrench, as far as in my power lies, the poniard so often tinged with human blood, from the hand of persecution; to sheath the sword, which misguided zeal has drawn in defence of a gospel which recommends peace and love; to restore to man the indelible charter of his temporal rights, which no earthly power has ever been commissioned by Heaven to deprive him of, on account of his mental errors; to re-establish the empire of peace, overthrown so often by religious feuds; and to cement all mortals,
especially

especially Christians, in the ties of social harmony, by establishing toleration on its proper grounds.

The history of the calamities occasioned by difference in religious opinions, is a sufficient plea for undertaking the task. But time does not allow me to enter into a detail of those melancholy scenes, which misconstrued religion has displayed. The effects are well known: but it is high time to remove the cause.

The mind shrinks back at the thoughts of the cruelties exercised against the Christians by the heathen emperors, for the space of three hundred years. Scarce did the Christians begin to breathe, under the first princes who embraced their religion, than they fell out amongst themselves, about the mysteries of the scriptures. Arianism, protected by powerful sovereigns, raised, against the defenders of the Trinity, persecutions as violent as those raised formerly by the heathens. Since that time, at different intervals, error, backed by power, persecuted truth. And the partisans of truth, forgetful of the moderation which reason and religion prescribe, committed the same excesses with which they upbraided their oppressors. Sovereigns, blinded by dangerous zeal,—or guided by barbarous policy,—or seduced by odious

odious counsels,—became the executioners of their subjects who adopted religious systems different from those of their rulers, or persevered in ancient systems, from which their sovereigns had receded.

Had those horrors been confined to one sect of Christians only, infidels would not have been so successful in their attacks on the system at large; though religion disclaims the odious imputation. But all sects execrated and attempted to extirpate one another. Europe became one wild altar, on which every religious sect offered up human victims to its creed.

The ministers of a religion that had triumphed over the Cæsars, not by resistance, but by suffering, became the apologists of calamities that swept from the face of the earth, or oppress to this very day, God's noblest images—upright, virtuous, and dauntless men. Like the warrior in the scriptures, they stepped into the sanctuary, to grasp the barbarian's sword wrapt up in the ephod. The code of temporal laws, teeming with sanctions against robbers and murderers, was swelled, to the surprise and destruction of mankind, with additional decrees against *heretics* and *papists*. The inoffensive citizen who from an apprehension of offending the Deity, by acting against his conscience,

was

was confined in the same dungeon, or doomed to the fagot or axe, with the parricide who laid aside every restraint of moral obligation : and the scriptures were adduced in justification of the sanguinary confusion. The wreath and the rod have been held forth, not to crown the worthy, and punish the pernicious, but to scourge to conformity, candid and steady virtue. The priest gave the sanction of heaven to the bloody mandates of the civil magistrate : and the civil magistrate unsheathed the sword to vindicate the cause of the God of Heaven, who reserves to himself the punishment of man's conscience. No person has a greater respect for the clerical order, of every denomination, than I have. I am of the number, and feel myself wounded through their sides, when the Deist and Free-thinker, who hold them all in equal contempt, contend " that in all ages, and in " all countries, the clergy are the main props " of persecution. That had they been as solicitous to heal, and conciliate men's hearts, " as they have been to inflame and divide them, " the world would by this time bear a different " aspect. That they should have left the laity " in peaceable possession of good neighbourhood, mutual charity, and friendly confidence. That instead of enforcing the great " principles of religion, the very basis whereof " is charity, peace, and love, they are ever and " always

“ always the oppressors of those who differ from
 “ them in opinion; and the active and impel-
 “ ling spring that gives force and elasticity, to
 “ the destructive weapons of the civil power.”

In corroboration of the charge, the free-thinker will unfold the page of history, and open those enormous volumes, made up of religious declamations. He will prove from both, that if
 “ popes and their apologists, have scattered the
 “ fire-brand, their spiritual brethren have faith-
 “ fully copied their example, in succeeding
 “ times, wherever their power and influence
 “ prevailed.”

“ Though the Protestant divines,” says Hume, “ had ventured to renounce opinions,
 “ deemed certain for so many ages, they re-
 “ garded in their turn, the new system so cer-
 “ tain, that they could bear no contradiction
 “ with regard to it: and they were ready to
 “ burn in the same flames, from which they
 “ themselves had so narrowly escaped, every
 “ one that had the assurance to oppose them.”*

Hence the scaffolds reeking in Holland with the blood of many illustrious men, who, after opposing Philip the Second's efforts to introduce conformity by fire and sword, fell themselves by the hand of the executioner, for denying Gomar's predestination. Hence Hecatombs

* Hume's Hist. of England, Vol. 4. p. 161.

tombs of victims offered up on the gloomy altar of the Scotch league and covenant, and peopling the region of the dead, for differing in opinion. "Out of every contested verse," says the satirical Voltaire, "there issued a fury, "armed with a quibble and a poniard, who inspired mankind at once with folly and cruelty."

The same demon that poured the poisonous cup over the kingdoms, and provinces of Europe, took his flight over the Atlantic, and spread his baneful influence amongst colonists who had themselves fled from the scourge. Their new built cities, like so many Jerusalems, were purified from Idolatry. There no Popish priest dared to bend his knee to "his idols, or "transfer to stock or stone, the worship due to "the God of Israel." There the Quaker-woman's silent groans were raised on the high key of loud shrieks, when the Lord's deputy ordered her profane breasts to be whipt off by the gospel scourge, that whipped the profaners out of the temple. There the Quaker was seen, suspended by the neck on high, for daring to pollute the sacred streets with his profane feet, *moved by Baal's spirit*. The holy city, * thus purged from the *Jebuseans*, and *Pheriseans*, was split soon after into two factions. The two famous

* See the history of Massachusetts bay, or Boston.

covenants, the covenant of grace, and the covenant of works, soon divided the spiritual militants. The jarring of divinity caused such dissensions, that in the presence of sixty thousand savages, headed by their warriors, giving the signal for scaling the walls, to bury the contending parties under their ruins, *grace* would not permit *works* to lend the least assistance for repelling the common foe. It became victorious over the Indians and Christians. It drove the first from its walls, and banished the latter from the city into savannahs and deserts, to procure themselves subsistence by the *works* of their hands.

In a word, persecution on the score of conscience, has thinned the world of fifty millions of human beings, by fire and sword. Thousands, who have escaped the sword and fagot, have perished, and are daily perishing with hunger and want, for their mode of worship. The London riots, occasioned by a pretext of religion, have added about four hundred more, deluded by religious frenzy, to the enormous number. And though they suffered as plunderers and incendiaries, yet religious intolerance in their leaders, occasioned the deluded people's destruction.

The history of the calamities, occasioned by the gospel of peace, could be concluded with

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the poet's Epiphonema. "Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!" "Such devilish acts religion could persuade!" *

The Quakers, to their eternal credit, and to the honour of humanity, are the only persons who have exhibited a meekness and forbearance, worthy the imitation of those who have entered into a covenant of mercy by their baptism. William Penn, the great legislator of that people, had the success of a conqueror in establishing and defending his colony amongst savage tribes, without ever drawing the sword; the goodness of the most benevolent rulers, in treating his subjects as his own children; and the tenderness of a universal father, who opened his arms to all mankind, without distinction of sect or party. In his republic, it was not the religious creed, but personal merit that entitled every member of society, to the protection and emoluments of the state. Rise from your grave, great man! and teach those sovereigns who make their subjects miserable, on account of their catechisms, the method of making them happy. They whose dominions resemble enormous prisons, where one part of the creation are distressed captives, and the other their un pitying keepers.†

I shall

* Creech's Lucretius.

† To William Penn should be join'd Lord Baltimore who granted free toleration in Maryland.

I shall examine the charter which is pleaded in justification of restraints on the score of conscience. The Protestant and Catholic are equally concerned in the discussion. Each would plead for toleration in his turn ; and the honour of religion, should be vindicated from the imputation of enormities, which should be transferred to their real principles—I mean the passions of men, or their ignorance of the limits which religion itself prescribes to their power. I know the difficulty there lies in encountering prejudices which have a long prescription to plead. I shall be asked whether I am ignorant of the rescripts of popes, inserting in the directory of the inquisition, the imperial constitutions, dooming heretics to the flames ; the authority of Catholic and Protestant canonists, divines, and Civilians, Calvin, Bellarmin, Gomar, benches of Protestant bishops, who gave their votes for enacting the law that doomed myself to transportation, and to death if ever I return to my native country ; though I am conscious of no crime against the state, but that crime of a legal creation, viz. *saying my prayers whilst others are cursing !* Am I ignorant of the practice of ages, which has given a sanction to fines, forfeitures, imprisonments and death itself, on the score of religion ? A practice, supported by the most learned writers of every denomination, and legible in bloody

characters in the annals of Protestant states, as well as in the registers of the inquisition? I answer, that I am not ignorant of the sanguinary rubric that first taught the manner of preparing the human victim for the altar of religion, in honour of a God, who instead of requiring such a sacrifice, died on the cross for his creatures, and with expanded arms prayed for his enemies: Neither am I ignorant of the gloomy ritual, substituted in certain kingdoms in the place of the fagot, and which prescribes the manner of stripping the man, in honour of a gospel, which commands to cloath the naked. They must both come under the same description. For if religion authorize to deprive a man of the means of supporting life, and providing for the education of his children, and the maintenance of his family; the same religion authorizes to deprive him of life itself. Religion is alleged on both sides, and as the degree of punishment is arbitrary, and lies at the discretion of the legislator, he can extend, or reduce it to what compass he thinks fit; and it is well known that a speedy death is preferable to a tedious agony.

But what if I oppose practice to practice; pope to pope; doctor to doctor? Without a cardinal's robe, or a bishop's rochet, what if my arguments in favour of the rights of mankind, should

should outweigh the reasoning of the purpled or mitred apologists of its oppressors? What if my authorities should prove more numerous and illustrious than theirs? What if I should happen to demonstrate, that when they allege religion as a sufficient motive for the exertion of oppressive power, in such an age, or in such a country, it must be the religion of time, or place, *but not the religion of the gospel*. “*Fides temporum, non evangeliorum.*”

Cartesius, in a stove, by remarking the motion of the smোক that rolled from his pipe, gave the first shock to Aristotle's barbarous philosophy, that kept the world in ignorance for so many ages. Succeeding geniuses improved upon the new plan; until at last Sir Isaac Newton dispelled the mist, and made the light shine forth in its full lustre. I in my cell, reflecting on the revolutions that religion has occasioned, not for the good, but for the destruction of mankind,—revolutions in their morals, by inspiring them with mutual hatred and aversion, by making them believe that they were dispensed with the unchangeable laws of love and humanity, and deluding them into a persuasion, that the death or oppression of a fellow creature on account of his error, was an agreeable sacrifice to the Divinity,—I also, by a feeble attempt to overthrow the altars of an idol, that has put Jesus Christ on
a level

a level with Moloch, and whose false oracles persuaded mankind, that the ears of a God of compassion and tenderness, were pleased with the groans of victims tied to the stake, or famishing in dungeons, or hovels,—may induce others to lift under the banner of benevolence, and pave the way for abler hands to raise the structure of human happiness, on the ruins of religious frenzy.

Locke has handled the subject, as a profound philosopher: Voltaire as a partial satirist in a declamatory style, more with a view to censure the scriptures, than to establish it on its proper grounds: I am confined to the province of a divine, and in that quality shall arraign at the bar of religion itself, the calamities to which the mistakes, or passions of men, have given rise, under pretence of vindicating the Deity. The bigot will consider me as a latitudinarian, to whom all religions are indifferent; and as one who writes in such a manner, as to dispense men with the obligations of submitting to the church. He is mistaken: I am a steadfast Catholic, who acknowledge but one God, one faith, and one baptism. I am not an architect who would build the edifice of my faith on different plans; nor an ambassador who would sign two contradictory treaties in my legation. Every person is bound to enquire after the truth, and when he finds

finds it, to embrace its dictates. If he neglect it, let the blame lie at his own door. Let charity and zeal induce his neighbour to instruct, and persuade him, when there is a probability of reclaiming him from error. But let not violence, oppression, and wanton insults be used in order to compel him. God has given him free will, and liberty of chusing either fire or water. The sanguinary divines, who think it lawful in the supreme magistrate to inflict a capital punishment, on misguided religionists, (for they do not allow one individual to kill or oppress another, on account of difference of religion) acknowledge that heretical and idolatrous kings, should not be deposed or killed, by their Christian or orthodox subjects: because, say they, "dominion is not founded in grace, " but in free will."——

I would fain know, by what right Christian, idolatrous, or orthodox kings, can deprive their heathen, Christian, heretical, or orthodox subjects of their lives or properties, on account of their mental errors. *But the scripture commands to obey kings in what is lawful:* and where does it command kings to kill or oppress their subjects? When it recommends justice and mercy to the rulers of the earth, does it make any distinction between their heathen, heretical, or orthodox subjects? The church disclaims the
right

right of the sword, and the use of fines and confiscations to promote her spiritual ends. The civil powers are not competent judges of speculative errors. How come people then, to be oppressed between the civil powers, and the established church in any state? If it be answered, that the established church in any state can exercise the right of the sword, not by herself but by her magistrate: The death then of the criminal, must entirely lie at the hangman's door; and the judge who passed a final doom on him has no share in the execution. Away then, for ever, with the odious and fallacious distinction.

Are the Catholic and Protestant princes of Germany, who have granted a free exercise of their religion, to all their subjects, worse Christians than the Catholic and Protestant princes of barbarous times, who were their subjects executioners? The Catholics and Protestants, who say their prayers in the same church, in that tolerating country, are they worse Christians, than the Catholics and Protestants whom Henry the Eighth used to couple together, on the same hurdle, and order to the place of execution? Or the church that sees her children receive the sacraments at the rails of the sanctuary, wherein the Protestant minister, and the Catholic priest officiate by turns, less enlightened and less tenacious

cious of her doctrine, than she was in the time of pope Innocent the Third? Death, fines, and confiscations, then, on the score of conscience, when the religionist behaves as a peaceable subject, are the ungraceful offspring of lawless rule. Tyranny begot it: ignorance fostered it: and barbarous divines have cloathed it with the *stolen* garments of religion.

S T A T E

O F T H E

C A S E.

HAS the supreme power in any state, a right to vindicate the Deity, by fines, forfeitures, confiscations, oppression, or the death of men, whose only crime is an erroneous religion, which does not disturb the peace of society, whether they be Jews, Mahometans, Christians, Heretics, or Catholics, provided they believe a supreme being, and rewards and punishments in a future state; for all people exclude from civil toleration, those who confound vice and virtue in the horrors of the grave. Because the links of society are dissolved, when vice loses its horror, and virtue its attractions: when the heart is steeled against the fear of an invisible Judge, and the conscience is unshackled from its bonds?

Answered in the negative. For life, liberty, the power to accumulate a fortune by honest means,

means, &c. are rights founded in nature: and the rights of nature are not reversed by the religion founded by Him, who declares, that he came *not to destroy but to save*. Much less can they be reversed by civil rulers, who are born like other men, and who would not be distinguished above the crowd, were it not for the social compact, by which they bound themselves to protect those rights, and preserve them inviolate. If they do otherwise, as often they have done, and do to this very day, it is by a stretch of power, not by the rule of right; and their only plea is that mentioned in Tacitus, “*Id enim est æquius quod est fortius.*”

From the earliest ages the boundaries of religion, and the concerns of the civil magistrate were kept distinct. If in the Jewish theocracy alone, they happened to be interwoven, and that a secession from the established religion was made capital; it was by a special commission from God, which Jesus Christ repealed in the new law, as we shall hereafter prove. Scattered tribes, before they subjected themselves to civil institutions, believed in a God, at whose hands they expected the rewards of their virtues, and dreaded the punishment of their misdeeds.

Religion, and conscience, its immediate interpreter, were anterior to society, and altars reeked with the gore of victims, before the
block

block was dyed with the blood of malefactors, spilled by the sword of the stern magistrate.

For his security and defence, man, on entering into society, gave up part of his liberty to dispose of his actions, his acquisitions, his time, which in the state of nature were at his own disposal. But he could never give up his way of thinking, or submit the dictates of his conscience, to the magistrate's controul. It is an interior monitor, whose voice cannot be silenced by human laws, and which our very passions, our inclinations, our temporal interest, can seldom bribe, how prone soever we may be to the collusive compact. Hear this, O ye rulers of the earth! Usurp no authority over God's inheritance. He alone can water and fertilize it with his grace, or from a hidden judgment, not cognizable by any earthly tribunal, strike it with barrenness and sterility. In this life you have power to kill, or to save the body: but leave the soul of man to the God who gave it. Call to mind that your power must be regulated by justice. Illustrious culprits, whose authority screens you from the rigour of human laws, if you violate the sacred rules of order, you are also to be judged. The splendor that surrounds you made the prophet cry out, *Ye are gods, and sons of the Most High*; but he afterwards eclipses this splendor with the veil of death,

death, *Ye also must die*. Let not bleeding victims, and famished objects, for the sake of a religion, which the rulers of the earth are the last to observe in their morals, be presented to you by your judge, who will call for your commission, and confront you with the works of your hands. The authority with which you are invested is delegated by the people, and while you enjoy it, you claim the sanction of Heaven. But neither Heaven nor man has granted you a power to punish any but malefactors. And no man is less liable to the imputation, than one who follows the dictates of his conscience. To him it is the oracle of the Divinity. In abiding by its dictates, he imagines to please his creator. An intention to please God is no crime. Mistaken he may be; but every mistaken man is not a malefactor or cheat.

If in a wanton fit of cruelty, you imitated those African kings, who leaping into their saddles, cut off their squires heads with one blow, to display their dexterity; or that Turkish emperor, who to shew the limner his mistake in painting the decollation of John the Baptist, called for a slave, and striking off his head, compared it with the picture; saying to the painter, you see by this head, that the veins in that picture are not sufficiently shrivelled—would your power screen you from the guilt of murder?

murder ? If I am doomed to the stake, or deprived of my horse, for not swearing to what I do not believe, the laws will justify the informer and executioner, who will say : “ the laws of “ your governors have so decreed.” It is, then, incumbent on governors to examine how far God will justify themselves. Nor is it a sufficient plea, that such laws were made by others, when it is by their own authority, they are put in execution. It is equal to the individual who is deprived of his life or his property, whether it be by the highwayman or the officer of justice, when life or property falls a sacrifice to the integrity of his conscience.

God rejects a homage which the heart believes; and woe to the conscience liable to the magistrate's control. It would be no longer the impregnable fortress that should never surrender, but on conviction that such is the will of its Master. It would be the ductile wax, on which every new impression would erase the former, and resume it by turns. It would believe the real presence in Rome and Upsal. It would deny it in Geneva and Edinburgh. In Paris, it would hope for an empyreal heaven, and joys spiritual and unspeakable, through the merits of Christ, in a future state; an earthly paradise and a seraglio of women, amongst never-fading bowers, if it worshipped

ped the great Alla, and Mahomet his prophet, in Constantinople. It would worship a living man in Tartary, and evil genii in Africa. An evident proof that God has never granted any control to kings or governors, over the conscience of man; and that it must be left to itself, and to the grace of him who gave it.

For, in every kingdom and government, the magistrates would claim the same power. Every one of them believes himself in the right: and should all of them be in the right, I am still in the wrong, when I act against my conscience. Instead of making a sincere convert, they will only make a perjured impostor of me. Hence, the wise Theodoric and other monarchs would never confer any extraordinary privileges on those who conformed to their religion. When one of his courtiers embraced Arianism, (that king's religion), "How would you have me trust you," said the monarch, "you, who betray your conscience, and Christ whom you have worshipped from your early days?" He preferred steady virtue, blended with what he deemed error, to deceitful hypocrisy, assuming the mask of truth; and never considered a man's religion as a sufficient plea for excluding him from the rights of a subject.

Must,

Must, then, a magistrate be quite indifferent about his religion? Must he see it insulted? Must he see error spread, and stand by as a neutral spectator?

By no means. If he be convinced of the truth of his religion, far from being indifferent about it, his duty is to practise it. And no religion, established by the laws of any state, be it ever so false, is to be insulted. It would be equally indecent and ridiculous, in a Christian missionary, to cry out in the streets of Constantinople, "Mahomet is a devilish impostor." He would not succeed so well as that Scotchman who went to Rome in order to convert pope Ganganelli. In all appearance, he studied the Revelations well, and found out the number of the beast, as well as the year of his downfall. Accoutred with his bible, and sure of success, he sets off for Rome; and, meeting the pope in St. Peter's church, cries out with a loud voice; "Rome is the scarlet whore; and you are the Antichrist. *Gang awa* for Scotland, and become a member of the kirk."* The pope's attendants requested he would get him confined. "God forbid," replied the pope, "that I would punish an honest man, who has gone through so many hardships,"
"for

* Moore's travels.

“for what he thought the good of my soul.” He made him some presents, and gave him full liberty to be guided by his *revelations*.

With regard to the magistrates duty in preventing error from spreading. Error may be considered in its different stages: either in its rise, or its progress. Montesquieu is of opinion, that, when there is but one religion established in a state, it lies at the magistrates discretion to reject a new doctrine; but, when many religions have got a footing in the state, they are to be tolerated.

The first part of this maxim is observed in Spain and Portugal: the second, to the happiness of mankind, and the honour of religion, is practised all over Germany, Switzerland, Holland, &c.

It is true, the first beginning of controversy may be checked by a steady severity: and a new doctrine may, perhaps, be eradicated with the death of its authors, without leaving any seeds of future innovations. But still the difficulty recurs, whether the misguided religionist, whose opinions do not interfere with the peace of society, the property of individuals, and the rights of magistracy,—and which are less sub-

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jected to the criterion of human understanding, being of the speculative kind, is punishable by the magistrate's sword? Reason combines with religion, to inform us that he is not: and the experience of ages evinces the impotence of such attempts. "The melancholy with which the
"fear of death, torture, and persecution, in-
"spires the sectaries," says Mr. Hume, "is the
"proper disposition for fostering religious zeal.
"The prospect of eternal rewards, when
"brought near overpowers the dread of tem-
"porary punishments: the glory of martyr-
"dom stimulates all the more furious zealots.
"Where a violent animosity is excited by op-
"pression, men pass naturally from hating the
"persons of their tyrants, to a more violent ab-
"horrence of their doctrine: and the specta-
"tors, moved with pity towards the supposed
"martyrs, are naturally seduced to embrace
"those principles which can inspire men with a
"constancy almost supernatural."

At all events, whatever may be said in fa-
vour of suppressing, by persecution, the first
beginnings of error; no solid argument can be
alleged for extending severity to multitudes.
Or, if persecution of any kind be allowed, the
most violent is the most effectual. Imprison-
ments, fines, and confiscations, are heavier tor-
ments,

ments, than the stake, wheel, or gibbet. For the man is tormented, but the error is not suppressed.

What is to be done, then, in the first stage of the error. Let the spiritual society, to whom the religionist belongs, when he attempts to alter her doctrine, correct, admonish, and exhort him. If he continues to be obstinate, let her refuse him her sacraments, the participation of her spiritual communion, the communication of her spiritual worship. To this alone her power is confined. She may caution her members against the contagion of his errors. Life, limb, the enjoyment of his estate, the authority of a husband, are founded in nature, and cannot be alienated by any spiritual jurisdiction; much less by the civil magistrate, who is not a competent judge of error; and whose sword may pierce the body, but can never controul the mind.

But if the laws of God, and the rights of mankind, do not permit to oppress an individual, for his mental errors; what are we to say when numbers of sects get footing in a state? Let the door of toleration be thrown open to them all, and not one of them be exposed as a butt to all the rest. Mutual hatred will relax, and the common occupations and pleasures of

life, will succeed to the acrimony of religious disputations.

In vain do Calvin, Bellarmin, and other apologists of persecution, arm the magistrate with texts of the old law, which commands to stone the false prophets to death, to put idolatrous cities to the sword, and “to slay Agag before the Lord.” The Jewish polity is quite different from modern political institutions. God himself was the immediate governor of this society, who worded, by himself, their laws and ceremonies,—who blended together their civil and religious institutions,—and who had an immediate power to deprive sinful man of the life of which he himself was the Author. Neither was it every false prophet he ordered to be stoned, nor every city he ordered to be put to the sword; but such prophets as sprang up from amongst the Jews themselves, and such cities as belonged to the Jewish theocracy,—I mean, cities inhabited by Jews who had been instructed in his laws and ceremonies. “If a false prophet rise up amongst you, in those days.” “The city which shall worship gods unknown there before,” &c.

This was rebellion against the state which he had taken under his immediate protection, and
which

which was of so peculiar a frame, as to be entirely dissolved by the introduction of idolatry. As, if a set of preachers got up now, and instilled into the minds of the people, a doctrine that would overthrow the three powers of the state in those kingdoms, to introduce a democracy; or monarchy into Holland, on the ruins of a republican government,—they certainly would suffer in both places, not for their religion, but for treason, in attempting to overthrow the respective governments.

Hence, the neighbouring cities, plunged in idolatry, which were not under the laws of the Jewish theocracy, were not destroyed on account of their false worship, but on account of crimes committed against the laws of nature, which had filled the measure of their iniquities. And Agag, a name so familiar in the mouths of fanatical preachers, in the time of Charles the first—and which, to the scandal of that age, and the discredit of the English peers and cavaliers, was couched in their address to queen Elizabeth, requesting the death of Mary, queen of Scots, “as Samuel slew Agag.” Agag, I say, was not put to death for worshipping his false gods, but for his cruelty and violation of the laws of nations: “As thy sword,” says the prophet, “has made many women childless,” &c.

Sensible

Sensible rewards and sensible punishments were requisite for the Jewish people. It was requisite to raise a wall of separation between them and neighbouring nations, to prevent the fatal effects of their inclination to idolatry. Their religious worship required to be inseparably interwoven with their civil polity, and considered the infringers of the law of God as rebels to the state, and enemies of their country. Their worship was an instrument in the hands of God, to exterminate people polluted with the most abominable crimes. Hence, afflictive punishments and death itself decreed by the law of Moses, against Jews fallen into idolatry, or into any other crime contrary to the law.

Those institutions were to have an end. The new alliance, promised in the old, has levelled the barrier that separated Jew and Gentile,—uniting both in the profession of the same faith. It proposes more sublime and exalted motives than those proposed by the Mosaic law. In the room of temporal rewards and temporal punishments, it has substituted those of an invisible and eternal nature. It acknowledges no strangers: it knows no enemy: it opens a door of mercy to all, and an entrance into its mysteries, without terror or compulsion. It is a delicious fruit that attracts the eyes of those who choose to view it; but never forces the hand to pluck it.

it. Jesus Christ never said: "Whoever does
 "not follow me, shall be miserable in this
 "world, shall be considered as a rebel to the
 "state in which he lives, unprotected by the
 "laws, doomed to the fagot, or stripped of
 "his property." He leaves it to every one's
 choice, either to follow or renounce him: "If
 "any one choose to come after me:" "Siquis
 "vult." When his very disciples intended to
 quit him, he does not retain them by compul-
 sion; but says in a gentle manner, "Are you,
 "also willing to quit me?" And it is vain to
 boast a gospel-liberty, when people are drag-
 ged, by confiscations, forfeitures, and death it-
 self, as so many forced victims, into the sanctu-
 ary of religion.

It is an abominable palliative to say, that
 though the fathers are bad proselytes, yet the
 children or grand-children may be good Pro-
 testants, or good Catholics: As if the son should
 be put in the way of salvation, by the perjury
 and hypocrisy of the father,—religion propa-
 gated by crimes, and evil committed, in consi-
 deration of the good which may arise from it,
 in express opposition to the tenets of that reli-
 gion which forbids it. The religion of Jesus
 Christ is proposed to all: and the more univer-
 sal it is, the less it employs terrors or constraints
 to enforce obedience to its injunctions. It
 stamps the sentiments of humanity, dictated by
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the law of nature, with a peculiar character of sweetness and charity.

Scarce had its founder assembled a few disciples, when two of them, storming with rage for being refused the rights of hospitality, requested permission to bring down the fire of heaven on the inhabitants. They imagined themselves in the times of Elias, when God punished with visible chastisements the insults offered to his prophets. Jesus Christ undeceives them: "You know not to what spirit you belong: the Son of man is not come to kill, but to save." As if he said, both to them and their successors: "It is no longer the time of menaces and torments. You live under a law whose spirit is not the spirit of terror, but the spirit of confidence and love. The Master whom you serve, does not thirst after the blood of his enemies: he does not choose to see them at his feet, in a fit of rage and despair. Forced homages are odious in his eyes. Thunder and the exterminating sword are not his arms. He is only come to convert and save souls; but not to destroy or furnish the bodies of men."

Hence, he has not given to those whom he has charged with the commission of extending and propagating his religion, any instruction but that of imitating his zeal, his patience, his
charity

charity towards mankind. He has furnished them with no other means of making profelytes to his religion, but persuasion, prayer, and good example. The theocratical government is no longer confounded and interwoven with civil and political institutions. The kingdom of Jesus Christ is not of this world. He leaves the rulers of the earth the full enjoyment of their prerogatives, whether they know him, or whether they blaspheme his name: and he leaves their subjects in full possession of their rights, as men.

Jesus Christ does not choose for subjects but such as freely list in his service. Those who are rebellious to his voice he terrifies with the punishments of a future state; and has not commissioned any power on earth to enlarge, by force, the boundaries of his kingdom. However his creatures may be divided in opinion about speculative points, he has left them one law which is liable to no interpretation, and must ever be interpreted in the literal sense: "Love one another: and do not to others, what you would not have others do unto you."

Calvin and Bellarmin's remaining arguments consist in similes, and some misconstrued passages of the fathers, who, in their homilies, inveigh against errors in faith, as against adultery,

tery, forgery, &c. on account of the divorce, a breach of divine faith causes between God and the Christian soul, and the enormity of *forging* or *counterfeiting* the divine credentials, with the *band of error*. But the disparity is obvious. Adultery, forgery, and similar crimes, fall immediately under the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate, on account of the injury offered to society, by invading the property of individuals committed to his care. The man who is in error, hurts none but himself. If others be misled by him, it is their own choice, and the result of their free will, over which the civil power has no control; nor the ecclesiastical power, but as far as it can refuse such persons the sacraments and the other religious symbols of her communion, which no church will give those out of her pale, and which no person, out of her pale, will require.

But in every state, is not blasphemy punished, though of a spiritual nature?

Blasphemy is punished, because it is an open irreverence to the Deity, the knowledge of whose attributes, and the dread of whose justice, is the very basis of civil society. But an erroneous opinion, in religion, can subsist with the respect due to the Deity.

A man,

A man, engaged in error, proposes to himself to serve God in the manner he thinks most pleasing to the Sovereign Being. Though he mistakes the right road, yet his intention is sincere. Moreover, blasphemy involves a breach of manners, which has a natural tendency to disturb the peace of society. A friend takes offence, if his friend is abused in his presence; a brother, if his brother is used in an incedent manner.

A Jewish rabbin may preach in his synagogue, that the Messiah is not yet come, and extricate himself as well as he can, by doing away the weeks and days of the prophet Daniel. No Christian can blame him: for we all know that it is the man's belief; and that he is sincere, though in error at the same time. But this Jew, convinced that Christ is respected by the Christians, and worshipped by them, as their God, would expose himself to the rigour of the magistrate, if he openly called Christ an impostor: because he insults the magistrate more than if he gave this denomination to his father or brother.

The most monstrous absurdity, then, that ever met with apologists in church or state, is the misdirected zeal that punishes the body for the sincerity of an erroneous conscience. Whereas, no person deserves more the severity
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of human laws, than the impostor who betrays it. The divines themselves, whose forced interpretations of scripture, and theological disputes, have armed sovereigns against their subjects, agree that no person can act against the immediate dictates of an erroneous conscience. Hence, the Jew, who is under a conviction that Christ is not God, would be guilty of gross idolatry, if, from motives of worldly interest, he worshipped him with the Christians. In punishing him for not worshipping Christ, you punish the candour, sincerity, and uprightness of a deluded man, who is afraid to offend his Creator. The same can be said of all others who dissent from any established religion.

But I will be told, that, in reasoning thus, I renounce my own creed: whereas the rescripts of popes, the establishment of the inquisition, and numberless texts of the canon law, relating to *heretics*, shew what a Catholic clergyman ought to believe.

I have already declared, and sufficiently proved, that the rescripts of all the popes that ever sat in Peter's chair, or ever will, can never make an article of faith for Roman Catholics; no more than a king of England's proclamation can make an article of faith for English Protestants, though he is head of their church.

Positive

Positive laws and human establishments, temporary sanctions and local regulations, are no creeds, nor articles of religion. And, happy for the honour of the Protestant religion in these realms, that they are not. No Catholic divine ever attributed such power to a general council, as sir William Blackstone attributes to the British parliament. "It can change," says he, "the religion of the land, and do every thing under heaven, that is possible." If all its acts were to be considered as articles of faith, (as some paltry scribblers would fain obtrude on the public, the texts of the canon-law, and the rescripts of popes, as articles of Catholic belief), the world could never see such a religious creed.

The reader would see, in Gothic characters, imprisonment and death decreed against the priest, for saying his prayers; *to pervert or be perverted* to the see of Rome, punished as high treason; a second refusal to take the old oath of supremacy, liable to a similar punishment. He would see the neighbour authorised to take his neighbour's horse; the son authorised to strip the father of his property; the articles of Limerick, under the solemn faith of a capitulation, violated without the least provocation on the part of the inhabitants. From those he would pass to others of less importance. He would

would see a solemn act of the legislature, commanding women to declare their own shame, and making it high treason in them to marry the king, if they were not virgins* ; another making it high treason in people who saw the nuptial-rites performed, and the monarch go to the nuptial-bed with his spouse, to believe that he was married to Anne of Cleves.

The Catholic orator, who would fain be on equal terms with his Protestant brother, either in the pulpit or in print, would amplify his theme, enumerate the circumstances, and, in a long strain of invective, hold forth that it is a principle of the Protestant religion, to persecute to death those of a different religion ; to encourage disobedience and rebellion in children to their parents ; to rob a man of his property ; to violate the laws of nations ; to be so incredulous as not to believe their own eyes ; and to administer to the passions and lust of their kings : then to produce extracts of their statutes, in corroboration of the charge, and to cast those horrors on all the Protestants in the world !

The candid, impartial man would be more nice than to confound the actions of men, and their positive laws, with the principles of the Protestant religion. And candour should induce the

* See the monstrous acts of parliament, in the reign of Henry VIII.

the ministers of the gospel, not to revile the body of Catholics, by extending local regulations, exaggerating facts, and erecting the mistakes and prejudices of a few, into a religious creed and a symbol of orthodoxy for the whole.

Those laws, then, that doom heretics to death, as well as the establishment of the inquisition, are no parts of a Catholic's creed : no more than the fore-mentioned acts of parliament are part of the church of England's creed.

The true religion should be preserved and perpetuated by the same means that established it,—by preaching the word of God, attended with prudence and discretion,—the practice of all Christian virtues,—boundless patience and charity.

Machiavel is of opinion, that “disarmed
“prophets never made any conquests.” Whatever respect is due to him, on account of his skill in sanguinary politics and literature, in this maxim he betrays equal ignorance and impiety. No prophet ever appeared more destitute of arms than Jesus Christ : no prophet ever made such rapid and extensive conquests,—I mean conquests such as he intended to make, by winning the hearts, changing the interior dis-
positions

positions of men, and, from bad and wicked, making them better and more virtuous.

The Christian religion gained ground under the heathen emperors, in the midst of the most violent persecutions, during three centuries.

The reverend gentlemen, who thought it lawful for kings to handle the sword, in vindication of the Deity, should have recollected that all the fathers, during five centuries, took this famous saying of Tertullian for their motto: "*Non est religionis, religionem cogere*"—It is not the province of religion, to force religion. It is needless to crowd my page with them. St. Gregory the Great, who lived in the sixth century, and knew the obligations of religion, as well as any of his successors, writes to a bishop who had beaten one of his clergy for heresy, that it is an unheard of and novel method of preaching the gospel, to enforce faith with the cudgel. "*Nova et inaudita prædicatio, quæ baculo adigit fidem.*" No heretics more dangerous in a state than the Priscillianists, whose maxim was—to swear and forswear themselves, sooner than betray their secrets. Their doctrine was condemned in a council in Spain; but their persons left at liberty. Two Spanish bishops, Ithacius and Ursacius, solicited the tyrant Maximus to put Priscillian to death. Hence St. Martin of Tours,
and

and all the bishops of Gaul and Spain, would never communicate with those sanguinary prelates, who were afterwards banished. Even a council that was held, would not admit any bishop who would communicate with one Felix, who concurred in the accusation of Priscillian; and whom the fathers call, “a murderer of heretics.”

The council of Toledo forbids the use of violence to enforce belief: “Because,” add the fathers, “God shews mercy to whom he thinks fit; and hardens whom he pleases.” “*Præcipit sancta synodus nemini deinceps ad credendum vim inferre. Cui enim Deus vult, miseretur; et quem vult, indurat.*” * And the council of Lateran, under pope Alexander the third, acknowledges, that the church rejects bloody executions on the score of religion: which proves to demonstration, that the canon charged to the fourth council of Lateran, under Innocent the third,—in which canon “the secular powers are addressed to take an oath, to exterminate all heretics out of their territories, and in case of refusal, to have their subjects absolved from their allegiance, and the lands of the heretics to be seized by the Catholics,” &c—is spurious. Collier, the Protestant historian, in his fifth volume of ecclesiastical

* Cap. de Judæis, dist. 45.

clesiastical history, acknowledges that it is not found in any copy coeval with the council. Some hundred years after the council, it was produced to light by a German. And we know full well, that, at that time, several spurious pieces were produced, to serve the purposes of rancour.

Were even such a decree, or any other of a similar nature, genuine, the Catholics would reject them, without any breach of faith: because the church has no power over life, limb, the rights of sovereigns, the property of individuals, or any temporal concern whatsoever. Her bishops, then, whether separately, or in a collective body, cannot graft any such power into their spiritual commission. They would act in an extrajudicial manner, and beyond the limits of their sphere. This I have proved in my Remarks on Mr. Wesley's letters, and elsewhere.

Far from countenancing cruelty, death, and oppression, "the spirit of the church was, in such a manner, the spirit of meekness and charity, that she prevented, as much as in her power, the death of criminals, and even of her most cruel enemies," says Fleury. "You have seen how the lives of the murderers of the martyrs of Aunania were saved; and St. Austin's efforts to preserve the Donatists, (who

“ (who had exercised such cruelties against the
 “ Catholics), from the rigour of the Imperial
 “ laws. You have seen how much the church
 “ detested the indiscreet zeal of those bishops,
 “ who prosecuted the heresiarch Priscillian to
 “ death. In general, the church saved the lives
 “ of all criminals, as far as she had power.
 “ St. Augustin accounts for this conduct, in
 “ his letter to Macedonius, where we read, that
 “ the church wished there were no pains in
 “ this life, but of the healing kind, to destroy
 “ not man but sin, and to preserve the sinner
 “ from eternal torments.”*

If, in after ages, some popes and bishops deviated from this plan of meekness and moderation, their conduct should not involve a consequence injurious to the principles of the Catholic church, which condemns such proceedings. The religion of Catholics and Protestants condemns frauds, fornications, drunkenness, revenge, duelling, perjury, &c. Some of their relaxed and impious writers have even attempted not only to palliate, but even to apologize for such disorders. The children of the Christian religion daily practise them,—is the Christian religion accountable for the breach of her own laws?

A a 2

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* Fleury, Discours 2, No. 9.

We prefer, then, the primitive fathers of the church, to Sylvester a Prierio, and some other canonists: and we presume as much knowledge and zeal for the Catholic religion in Gregory the Great and his predecessors, as in any of his successors, in ages less refined.

The opposition given, in Catholic countries, to the establishment of the inquisition,—the death of the inquisitors by the hands of the people,—and the general odium it raised,—prove that the sparks of the moderation and meekness recommended in the gospel, and practised in the primitive times, with regard to people of a different persuasion, were not quite extinct, even in the ages of darkness and barbarism. Popes themselves opposed its introduction into Venice: and whether from policy or piety, I shall not take upon me to determine.

But Berkely remarks, that, “if policy induced a pope to oppose its introduction in a certain state, policy might have induced another pope to introduce it into his own.”* I am convinced he was not mistaken in his conjectures.

The pope was in possession of a city which formerly gave birth to so many heroes, besides a good territory bestowed on him by several
fove-

* Minute Philosopher.

sovereigns. He thought it high time to look about him, when all Europe was in one general blaze. The liberty of the gospel, preached by Muncer and several other enthusiasts, threw all Germany into a flame, and armed boors against their sovereigns. As he was a temporal prince, he dreaded for his sovereignty, as well as other crowned heads in his neighbourhood; and the more so, as his soldiers were better skilled in saying their beads, than handling the musket,

Great events, the downfall of empires, and the rise or destruction of extraordinary characters, are commonly foretold in oracles, both sacred and profane; and he found himself in the same dubious and critical situation with Montezuma, when the Spaniards landed in America;

“ Old prophecies foretel our fall at hand,
“ When bearded men in floating castles land.”*

Long before the reformation, the dimensions of his city were taken; the line was extended over its walls; and it was discovered that it was the “ great city, built on seven hills, the
“ harlot that had made the kings of the earth
“ drunk with her cup; and that her sovereign
“ was Antichrist, the man of sin,” mentioned
by

* Dryden's Indian Queen.

by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Thessalonians. Wickliff, Hufs, and Jerome of Prague, had laid down as a rule, many years before, that "popes, princes, and bishops, in the state of mortal sin, have no power;" and a state of grace was, doubtless, incompatible with the character of *Antichrist*. Jerome of Prague, who was burnt afterwards at Constance, to shew that Rome was the harlot of the Revelations, after beating a monk, and drowning another, dressed, one day, a prostitute in a pope's attire, with the three-crowned cap, made of paper, on her head, and in her head-dress, without being so careful of the rest of her body, leads the female pontiff, half naked, in procession through the streets of Prague, in derision of a religion professed by the magistrates.

Some *well-bred* divines there are, who justify such proceedings, on the principle that it was requisite, at that time, "to cry aloud, and use a strong wedge to break the knotty block of Popery." I do not believe there is a well-bred Protestant living, who would applaud either *martyr* or *divine*, who would exhibit such a merry spectacle in the streets of Dublin or London; or who would shed a tear for his loss, if, after exhibiting such a shew in Rome or in Paris, he fell into the hands of the inquisition,

or were sent to the gallies. The gospel-truth is no enemy to decency.

St. Paul, in pleading his cause before Festus, did not inveigh against his vestal virgins, the adulteries of his gods, or the wickedness of his emperors. Let a religion of state be ever so false, the magistrate who professes it, will feel himself insulted, when it is attacked in a gross, injurious manner: and, if apologies can be made for indecencies and seditious doctrines, under pretence of overthrowing idolatry, some allowance must be made for men who think themselves insulted by such attacks.

The pope, then, as a sovereign prince, had every thing to dread, when the thrones of the German princes began to totter from the shocks of *inspiration*: but what still increased his alarms, was—the unfolding of the Revelations, which held him up to all Europe, as the Antichrist, the general enemy of Christians, who should be destroyed. Lest any one should miss his aim, it was proved from the Revelations, that he was the beast with ten horns; and, in bearing down such a game, the world was to be renewed, and the peaceful reign of the millennium, during which Christ was to reign with the saints on earth, was to begin. The time was approaching. Old John
Fox,

Fox, the martyrologist, says, that “ after long
“ study and prayers, God had cast suddenly
“ into his mind, by divine inspiration, that the
“ forty-two months must be referred to the
“ church’s persecution, from the time of John
“ the Baptist.” This calculation was to bring
on the pope’s destruction about the year sixteen
hundred. Brightman was more precise, and
foretold the final downfall of the pope, in the
year fifteen hundred and forty-six: others in
fifteen hundred and fifty-six: and others in
fifteen hundred and fifty-nine. Luther came
closer to the famous æra; and published his
prophecy, in which it was revealed to him, that
the pope and the Turk would be destroyed in
two years after the date of his oracle. This,
certainly, was a close attack on the pope, who,
in all appearance, did not like to die so soon,
even of a natural death. He apprehended the
accomplishment of the oracles the more, as at
that time almost every one was inspired, and
ready to do any thing for the destruction of
Antichrist.

Alexander Ross, in his view of religion, de-
scribes numbers of those prophets, and amongst
the rest one Hermannus Sutor, a cobbler of
Optzant, who professed himself a true prophet,
and Messiah Son of God: a very dangerous
neighbour for Antichrist! This man, to receive
the

the prophetic inspiration, stretched himself naked in bed; and, after ordering a hogthead of strong beer to be brought close to him, began to drink in the source of inspiration, and to receive *the spirit by infusion*; when on a sudden, "he," to use the words of Alexander Ross, "with a Stentor's voice and a horrid howling, among other things, often repeated this: Kill, cut the throats, without any quarter, of all those monks, all those popes. Repent, repent: for your deliverance is at hand."* However extraordinary such a character would appear now, yet at that time, inspiration was so frequent, that one would imagine all Germany was a nation of prophets: and Hermannus, who was afterwards put to death by Charles, lord of Guelderland, had credit enough to make profelytes.

The pope, thus aimed at, as an object of destruction, from all quarters,—and seeing, almost in every nation in Europe, a nursery of prophets foretelling his ruin, and animating the candidates for sanctity to undertake the pious task,—began to tremble, not only for his territories, but moreover for his personal safety. He knew that the imaginations of his Italian subjects were naturally warm; and that, if but one of them caught

* Ross's View of Religions. In the appendix, p. 31.

caught the prophetic flame, the stiletto would soon be darted into Antichrist. He found Imperial laws already enacted, and as he was a temporal prince whose person was more exposed than any highwayman in Europe, he copied those laws into his directory; and erected the Inquisition as a barrier between himself and the formidable foes, who not only foretold his downfall, but encouraged their followers to fulfil the prediction.

The impartial reader, in tracing this formidable tribunal, will discover a political establishment, and a temporal safeguard. None can infer from its institution, that it is lawful by the principles of religion, to deprive a man of his life, precisely on account of his worship: and every one must acknowledge, that, if ever a prince, whose life and territories were in danger, was authorised to take the severest precautions to secure both, no mortal could plead for greater indulgence in having recourse to rigorous measures, than one who united in his person the dignity of a prince, which at that time was both an object of envy and detestation to people who considered sovereignty as subversive of Christian liberty, and the character of a sovereign pontiff, which made him pass for an outlaw, and the great enemy of Christ, in whose
destruction

destruction the world was so deeply concerned. Let any person put himself in his case, and judge for himself.

It is, then, to those authors who disgraced themselves, and exposed the oracles of the Christian religion to the derision of infidels, with their fanatical calculations, their beasts, horns, and strained allegories of seven hills,—it is to the rage of people who could not take more effectual steps to get him stabbed in his church or his palace,—and to the terrors of a man who thought himself justifiable in providing for his personal safety,—that the world is indebted for the inquisition in Rome. Its fires are daily extinguishing, in proportion as prophecy is diminishing: and the liberality of a refined age discovers no horns on the head of a Ganganelli, or Benedict the fourteenth, who united in their persons the grandeur of kings, the discretion of bishops, the elegance of courtiers, and the learning of philosophers.

The two last prophets I have read who have brought the pope's destruction nearer our own times, are Whiston and Burroughs. The first foretold that the pope's destruction would happen in seventeen hundred and twenty-four. And the second, finding Mr. Whiston's prophecy

phesy contradicted by time, began himself to prophesy that this great event was to happen in seventeen hundred and sixty. Yet, since those two prophets "have been gathered unto their fathers," the air of Rome has not been embalmed with the effluvia of the smothering blood of a Jew: and in Spain and Portugal, we hear no longer of human victims being offered up as "a sacrifice of agreeable odour to the Lord."

In those two kingdoms, the inquisition owes its origin to causes much similar to those which gave it rise at Rome: but causes, however, which did not so immediately affect the sovereign, who was blended with the common-mass of monarchs, without any peculiar distinction to expose him to the hatred of mankind; or to afford his assassin a plea of impunity, by alleging that he was the deliverer of the world, by ridding it of the enemy of the Son of God, described in the prophecies of Daniel, pointed out in the Revelations, and whose downfall was foretold, at such a time, by the most celebrated interpreters of scripture.

The Spaniards struggling for a long time with Mahomet's followers who had invaded their country, and reduced them, not only to the
most

most abject slavery, but moreover forced them to supply the fire of their lusts with continual fuel, by sending an annual tribute of Christian virgins to their seraglio, made at last that great effort so memorable in history.

It is well known that before the final defeat of the Moors, and their total expulsion from the Spanish dominions, they were preparing, under hand, for war, and had their leaders already chosen. Banished for ever from a kingdom where they had trampled on the laws which all Christians, and even heathen fathers deem most sacred, a barrier to their return was erected : and, as by their own laws, every Christian who has any connection with a Mahometan woman, is to pass through the fire, the tables were turned on themselves, and the expectants of an earthly paradise were threatened with the fagot, if they returned to initiate the children of Christians in their mysteries.

The most effectual way to remove prejudices, is—to put one's self in other people's situation. And if the establishment of the inquisition seems severe and unreasonable, it must be acknowledged, that the love of life, and the abhorrence of oppression, are passions that very often overpower reason itself. No man would choose to be considered as an outlaw on whose
head

head a price was set, and to whose destruction thousands were animated, under the sanction of scripture. Neither is it in the nature of Christian kings, who often destroy their own relations, when they suspect them for aspiring to their thrones, to suffer the sworn enemies of the gospel, and the corrupters of the morals it enforces, in the possession of their provinces and palaces, when they can recover what they deem their right. It was, then, dread of danger, and love of liberty, a deep sense of injuries, and a provisionary caution against death and oppression, not a principle of religion, that gave rise to the inquisition in Rome, Spain, and Portugal. It is not from the church it can derive any power: and if it has any other motive in view than to secure the peace of society by temporal means, it exceeds the limits of its authority. For error in faith is not a crime, but relatively to a supernatural order, which does not come within the verge of civil jurisdiction: and the last resource of the church is only a canonical censure. Those censures she never denounces, but against her own rebellious children, reared up in her bosom: and with regard even to those, she is bound to use the greatest precaution.

Her spiritual weapons should not be drawn but against the enormities of individuals; nor
against

against those, when they are powerful enough to raise a faction or party ; nor against any one, when it is probable they will not obtain the end proposed,—I mean, the correction of the sinner. “ With regard to the multitude, censures “ are never to be employed,” says St. Austin. Exhortations, not commands,—instructions, not menaces,—are, then, her only weapons. And when any of her popes or bishops adopted any other plan, they consulted more their power, and the rigour of the law, than the rules of prudence. They behaved like those hot-headed princes, who finding a great number of their subjects guilty of insurrection, would put them all to the sword, at the hazard of seeing their kingdoms depopulated.

Whence, then, came those rigorous laws on the score of religion to be introduced ? If speculative errors, unconnected with principles subversive of subordination and morality, have been the only motives, it must be acknowledged, that they originated in an abuse of power, and an error of fact, as well as of right, which made princes believe that, as they were the arbiters of life and death, they could punish all kinds of crimes, whether against God, or the peace of civil society. In matters more immediately within the reach of the civil magistrate, the laws of all nations afford instances of power extend-

extending beyond the limits of reason, and confounding the sacred rules of equity, which proportion the punishment to the offence. Thus, in Holland, a subject forfeits his life, if he kills a stork, when a few dollars would be a sufficient penalty; especially for a Dutchman. In England, the cutting down a cherry-tree in an orchard is a capital offence. And in Ireland, I have seen two men put to death,—the one, because a sheep was found in his bawn, which the real thief had left there; and the other, for a miserable calf-skin, which he bought on the high-road, from the man who stole it; and who, doubtless, did not inform the purchaser of the manner in which he had acquired it:—when the laws dictated by God himself, decreed no more than the restitution of an ass, against the thief who had stolen one from his neighbour; and a four-fold restitution against the man who stole an ox.

If princes and other rulers, then, magnify objects in such a manner as to make trifles capital, in consequence of their power, to which they imagine no bounds should be prescribed; let us not be surprised if monarchs, who thought themselves the delegates of Heaven, and answerable for any crime against the Divinity which they would countenance in their state, have enacted laws which torture the body for the errors of the mind.

It

It was with difficulty that king Edward the sixth was prevailed on, not to commit his sister Mary to the flames. For he could not reconcile to his conscience, to permit his sister to live in idolatry, when it was in his power to check the progress of such a disorder.

We see, by the different edicts against heretics, in the Theodosian code, that the first Christian emperors did not, however, consider religious error as a sufficient cause for capital punishment. Constantine grants a free toleration to all Christians, in one of his edicts: in another, he restrains this indulgence to the Catholics alone. In one edict, he orders the churches to be taken from the Donatists: in another, he moderates the rigour of this edict, by permitting them to return to their country, and to live there in quiet: “reserving to God” “the punishment of their crime.”—Remarkable words! We have seen before, how the primitive fathers opposed sanguinary executions, and pleaded for liberty of conscience. St. Hilary earnestly requests the emperor Constantius to grant his subjects liberty of conscience, whether they be Arians or no.

If, then, in an age enlightened by the works of the fathers, and after the example set by Constantine, the emperor Theodosius condemned Manicheans to the fire; it must be

more owing to abominable practices, than to speculative errors. And, if succeeding emperors continued the same rigour, it is that sedition or immorality or both, kept pace and were incorporated with speculative deviations. Scarce an age, since Theodosius's time until of late years, but brooded some immoral or seditious doctrine, which armed the magistrate's hand with the exterminating sword. Great part of St. Austin's time was taken up in pleading for mercy with the African governors, in favour of the Donatists and Crescellians, who continually exercised the greatest cruelties.

Another age gave rise to the Patarini and Runcaires, who amongst other errors maintained, that no mortal sin could be committed by the lower part of the body. The theory was reduced to practice : and, doubtless, the magistrate was roused to severity.

The Albigenes said that God had two wives. Marriage, however, was condemned, without considering chastity as a virtue. In detestation of the sacrament of the altar, churches were turned into receptacles for the unhappy votaries of Venus : and in the sanctuary where the magistrate was accustomed to see the minister of religion officiate, nothing could be seen but offerings to Cloacina. In twelve hundred and thirty, the Stadings of Germany honoured Lucifer ;

cifer ; inveighed against God for condemning that rebel-angel to darkness ; held that one day he would be re-established, and they should be saved with him. Whereupon, they taught that, until that time, it was not requisite to serve God, but quite the contrary ; and reduced their theory to practice.

To write the history of all the sects which gave rise to the severe sanctions of kings, from the time of the emperor Theodosius down to the sixteenth or seventeenth century, would be to attempt writing a history of all the horrors and abominations of which abandoned man is capable. In this long space of time, the sects most free from any mixture of immorality, gave umbrage to the civil power, by their seditious tenets and insurrections.

Hus's doctrine, in Bohemia, sowed the seeds of civil wars. Wickliff's doctrine, in England, was productive of similar fruits. The fagot did not blaze in England until the Lollards began to overturn the state. In the sixteenth century, what wars, what commotions, in Germany, in consequence of fanatical delusion ! The most moderate Protestant divines of that age, complain in their writings, of the confusion introduced by sectaries. Heylin, in his cosmography, talks of some of them " begotten in rebellion,

“born in sedition, and nursed by faction.” And doctor Walton, in the preface to his Polyglote, says, that “Aristarchus heretofore could
“scarce find seven wise men in Greece: but
“that, in his time, so many idiots, were not to
“be found: for all were divinely learned.
“Hence,” continues the doctor, “the bottomless pit seems to have been set open:
“and locusts are come out with stings,—a numerous race of sectaries who have renewed
“all the ancient heresies, and invented many
“monstrous opinions of their own.” In examining, then, the laws enacted against heretics, and tracing them up to their origin,—in taking a review of the times and circumstances in which they were enacted, and the tenets of the persons against whom they were levelled,—in weighing the emperor Constantine’s words, already quoted,—and observing the instability of his opinion, in the change of his laws, we can, with every reason, presume that error in doctrine was never deemed a sufficient title to deprive a man of his life or property, by the most pious and enlightened Christian legislators.

Immorality or sedition, mingling with the speculative opinion unpunishable in itself by any civil tribunal, drew the vengeance of the laws upon the entire system and its abettors: as the circulation of bad coin is punished by
the

the magistrate, not on account of the particles of gold or silver, but on account of the base metal, which predominates and debases it. If time, civilization, commerce, a more extensive knowledge of mankind, and the rights of society, helped the mind to work off the feculence of pernicious opinions, as rough wines work off their tartar—Freedom of thought, its inalienable prerogative was at last reconciled amongst most men with the principles of morality, and the peace of society. Men have changed: but long habit and the power of rule have still, in many places, kept up laws which confound mistaken notions of a spiritual nature, with practical principles which disturb the order of society. Heresy is of too indeterminate a signification, to become the object of legal vengeance. And to punish a man for *Papery*, is to punish him because another pronounces a word of three syllables. Let the *Heretic* and the *Papist*, who rob, steal, murder, preach up sedition, rebellion, immorality; suffer like all other felons. But the magistrate who punishes an honest, peaceable man, for following the religion of his education, and the dictates of his conscience; and the legislators who authorise him to do so;—both forget themselves and the rights of mankind.

The

The heathen magistrates punished none for worshipping many gods. But we read of a city whose inhabitants were all drowned, for adopting the impiety of Diagoras who was a declared atheist.

The Christian magistrate will not punish a man who has no religion: because the versatile conscience of such a man will mould itself into any frame. But the upright man who, from fear of offending God, will not resign his way of thinking, but upon a thorough conviction that he is in error; is deemed unworthy the protection of the laws. His conscience, which it would be a crime to betray, is made a crime by positive institutions. Thus, Tiberius's artifice is revived.—It was prohibited by the laws, in his time, to put a virgin to death. A virgin is accused of high treason; and, on conviction, (an easy matter in his days), her virginity is pleaded, in bar to the execution of the sentence. He ordered the executioner to ravish her: and then the law took its course. Thus, guilt and punishment were reconciled.

The laws of God command me not to act against the immediate dictates of my conscience. The laws of man make this conformity to the dictates of my conscience, a crime: and I am accordingly punished.

Towards

Towards people confirmed in the prejudices of their education, and the religion of their fathers, no severity, tending to deprive them of the rights to which nature entitles them, should be used. It is the unanimous opinion of the fathers: and a large volume could be composed of passages, extracted from the works of modern writers of every denomination, in support of the assertion.—

“ We know that faith may yield to persuasion: but it never will be controlled.”*
 “ Remember that the diseases of the soul are not to be cured by restraint and violence.”†
 “ Indulge every one with civil toleration.”‡

If, to the spirit of the gospel, the authority of fathers, councils, the practice of the primitive times, and the opinions of the most learned of the modern writers, we add arguments drawn from the sources of divinity, we expect to disarm the magistrate, and to prevail on him to sheath the sword which God never commanded him to wield against the professors of peaceable errors.

Faith is a gift of God, which it is not in the power of the state either to give or to take away.

It

* Flechier, bishop of Nîmes.

† Cardinal Camus.

‡ Fenelon to the duke of Burgundy.

It depends chiefly on the change of the heart, the interior dispositions of the mind, and the grace of the Almighty, which it is in his power alone to give, in greater or lesser abundance to his creatures. We do not pretend to open the gate to error, or to lull mortals asleep in an indifference to the truth. We only beseech the powers of the earth not to add to the calamities of Adam's children, by fines, confiscations, poverty, restraints, or death, for abstruse and speculative matters beyond the reach of human controul. We know that God being every where present to call his creatures to his service, to support them in their hope, to confirm them in his love, to help their endeavours, and to hear their prayers, it is their own fault if they perish. To some he gives the knowledge of his law: but they reject it. Others he inspires with the spirit of prayer: but they neglect it. He speaks to the hearts of all: but few listen to his voice. Some he converts by an effectual grace, who plunge themselves a second time into their disorders. Some he strengthens and fortifies in the constant love of order and justice to the last moment of their lives: and others he gives up to their blindness and corruption. He permitted the first man to sin, and thus to involve us all in his miseries, when it was in his power to prevent sin,

sin, without destroying his liberty. And this will ever be an insoluble difficulty to man.

Faith, then, depending entirely on the interior dispositions of the mind, the quantity of grace, and the measure of spiritual science, which it is in the power of God either to increase, or, from a just but hidden judgment, to diminish; the want of it cannot be punished by any earthly tribunal: because the magistrate's power extends only to outward crimes that disturb the temporal peace of society, but not to the hidden judgments of God, nor to the interior dispositions of the mind, nor to the disbelief of divine truths,—the necessary result of both. Death, restraints, and confiscations, then on the score of religion, are murders and robberies, under the sanction of mandatory laws.

“ We were of opinion,” says St. Austin, writing to the Manicheans, “ that other methods
 “ were to be made choice of; and that to recover you from your errors, we ought not to
 “ persecute you with injuries and invectives, or
 “ any ill treatment; but endeavour to procure
 “ your attention by soft words and exhortations,
 “ which would shew the tenderness we have for
 “ you: according to that passage of holy writ
 “ —The servant of the Lord ought not to love
 „ strife

“ strife and quarrels ; but to be gentle, affable,
“ and patient towards all mankind ; and to re-
“ prove with modesty those who differ from
“ him in opinion. Let them only treat you
“ with rigour, who know not how difficult it
“ is to find out the truth, and avoid error.
“ Let those treat you with rigour, who know
“ not how rare and painful a work it is calmly
“ to dissipate the carnal phantoms that disturb
“ even a pious mind. Let those treat you with
“ rigour, who are ignorant of the extreme dif-
“ ficulty that there is to purify the eye of the
“ inward man, to render him capable of seeing
“ the truth which is the sun and light of the
“ soul. Let those treat you with rigour, who
“ have never felt the sighs and groans that a
“ soul must have, before it can have any know-
“ ledge of the Divine Being. To conclude, let
“ those treat you with rigour, who never have
“ been seduced into errors near akin to those
“ you are engaged in.

“ I pass over in silence, that pure wis-
“ dom, to which but a few spiritual men at-
“ tain in this life : so that though they know
“ but in part, because they are men ; yet,
“ nevertheless, they know what they do know
“ with certainty : for in the Catholic church, it
“ is not penetration of mind, nor profound
“ knowledge,

“knowledge, but simplicity of faith, which
“puts men in a state of safety.” *

To such an illustrious authority we shall add another. Salvianus, bishop of Marseilles, discoursing on the Arian Vandals, speaks as follows: “They are ignorant of what is commonly known among other men; and only know what their doctors have taught them, and follow what they have heard them say. Men so ignorant as these, find themselves under a necessity of learning the mysteries of the gospel, rather by the instructions that are given them, than by books. The tradition of their doctors, and the received doctrines, are the only rules they follow, because they know nothing but what they have taught them. They are then heretics, but they know it not. They are so in our account, but they believe it not, and think themselves so good Catholics, that they treat us as heretics; judging of us as we do of them. We are persuaded that they believe amiss, concerning the divine generation, when they maintain the Son inferior to the Father: and they imagine that we rob the Father of his glory, who believe them both to be equal. We have the truth on our side, and they pretend it is on theirs.
“We

* Augustinus contra epistolam fundamenti.

“ We give to God his due honour, and they
 “ think they honour him better. They fail
 “ in their duty, but they imagine they perform
 “ it well; and they make true piety consist in
 “ what we call impious. They are in a mistake,
 “ but with a great deal of sincerity; and it is
 “ so far from being an effect of their hatred,
 “ that it is a mark of their love of God; since
 “ by what they do, they shew the greatest re-
 “ spect for the Lord, and zeal for his glory.
 “ Therefore, though they have not true faith,
 “ they nevertheless look upon that, as a perfect
 “ love of God. It belongs only to the Judge of
 “ the universe, to know how these men will
 “ be punished for their errors at the last
 “ day.”*

“ As to what is concealed from the know-
 “ ledge of mortals,” says St. Chrysostom, “ let
 “ the searcher of hearts determine, who alone
 “ knows the measure of knowledge, and the
 “ quantity of faith: whose judgments are in-
 “ scrutable, and ways unsearchable.”†

Religion, then, recoils at the thoughts of
 stripping the victim for his mode of worship.
 We should make allowance for the weakness of
 our fellow creatures; and reflect that few per-
 sons view objects in the same light. What
 makes

* Salvianus.

† Homilia contra anathematizantes.

makes a deep impression on one, makes but a slight impression on another. Universal orthodoxy has never been established, since Cain has built the first city, and separated from the children of God, nor ever will to the end of time.

Amidst the dark and doubtful images of things, the sport of the passions, the prejudices of education, the disputes of the learned, and the clouds that hang over weak and fluctuating reason, it is hard to separate the clear from the obscure, truth from error, and to assign them their proper situations in light, and shade. Add to this what I remarked before, that faith is a gift of God, to which the heart must be disposed by the operations of an interior grace, which God alone can give, and which is obtained more by prayer than by disputing. If we take a survey of nature itself, which God has given up to the disputes of men, the smallest insect baffles our severest scrutiny. From the ant up to the elephant, and from the germination of a blade of grass, to the immense bodies that swim in the yielding ether above, every thing is an inexplicable mystery. The very soul with whose nature we should be better acquainted, and from whose active powers we derive our faculties and judgment, is a torch with which we are enabled to view the universe, and yet
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our philosophers know not where it shines. Some assign the brain for the seat of this immortal spirit. Others the blood; others the pineal gland; and others, unable to comprehend how matter and spirit can be so closely interwoven, as to form one compound called man, assert that the soul abides at a distance from the body, and influences it as the sun influences certain plants, that turn round and humour its motion.

What an immense library could be made up of all the books on this immortal spark that animates us! Whether it existed before its union with the body,—Whether it undergoes the same fate of extinction,—If it survives, whether it goes to the silent shades of the dead, naked, or clothed in a thin pellicle, imperceptible to the anatomist's eye, but qualifying it in the other world for feeling the smarting sensations excited by tormenting fire, which otherwise could not affect a pure spirit, without having recourse to an extraordinary power, the miraculous exertion whereof is spared by this coat of imperceptible *skins*, cut for the spirit in a philosopher's brain —The soul's state and residence in the long interval between death and the final consummation of all things.—

Burnet,

Burnet, the learned author of the Theory of the earth, laughs at the purgatory of the Catholics; but strikes into a path in which few Protestant divines would choose to take him for their guide. He admits none to the clear sight of God, until after the resurrection; heaps up testimonies to vindicate prayers for the dead; establishes *Hades*, a receptacle for souls, and a middle state where they expect the coming of Christ, and the sound of the last trumpet.*

If, from ourselves, and nature that surrounds us, we make an excursion into the region of mysteries, with what darkness has not God overspread "the face of the deep!" What disputes between Catholic and Protestant writers on one side, and the Arians and Socinians on the other, about the divine generation of the Son of God! what a deluge of blood spilt on that occasion, when the Arians were supported by powerful emperors, who drew the sword to decide the controversy!

Should one of the Bramins come amongst us, and after studying our languages, sit down to read the scriptures, to consult our writers, and to determine upon the choice of a religion, what a laborious task! From the time of Pelagius, down to our days, what disputes about original

* In his book *De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*.

ginal sin! How could it be propagated to a child whose body could not sin, whose soul came pure from its Creator's hands, whose father and mother were purified themselves from original stain, and guiltless in complying with the institutions of God and nature. Let this Bramin read the works of the Divines of the church of England, in favour of infant baptism, he will regret his not having been consecrated to God before the use of his reason. When he reads the Anabaptist divines against infant baptism, he will rejoice that he did not enter too soon into a covenant, whereof he did not know the conditions and terms.

When Barclay published his apology for the Quakers, he cut out a good task for the Divines of the church of England, who were obliged to display their erudition in order to refute him.

If from baptism we pass to the Lord's supper, what difficulties to encounter! What arguments against the real presence by Zuinglius, Calvin, Du Moulin, Claude, Tillotson! And what formidable opponents have not those writers to engage, in the persons of Luther and the Lutheran Divines; Bossuet, Arnauld, and the numerous tribes of Catholic Doctors! Text for text: reason for reason. Assailants and defendants

ants take their weapons from the same arsenal, and handle them with surprising address and skill.

If the church of England be consulted on the important mystery, her answer only puzzles and perplexes:

“What is the inward part of the sacrament?”

“The body and blood of Christ, verily and
“indeed received by the faithful.”

For as doctor Burnet remarks, the Divines who composed the liturgy, had orders to leave it as a speculative point, not determined; in which every person was left to the freedom of his choice.* If the divines, after searching the scriptures and fathers, call philosophy to their assistance, Mr. Locke, one of its oracles, will tell them, that the idea of body and the idea of place, are so closely connected, that it is impossible to conceive one body in two different places at the same time. Cartesius, who was the first that dispossessed Aristotle of his throne, Gassendi, that famous priest, who revived and improved Epicurus's system of atoms, Cassini, and thousands beside, were as well acquainted as Locke, with the nature of place and bodies, and doubtless his superiors in the knowledge of

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* History of the Reform. b. 3.

the mathematics; yet they could discover no contradiction in the same body being in different places at the same time, when once they supposed the interposition of infinite power, and the pliancy of space and matter, to the irresistible will of omnipotence, which can neither create or annihilate them.

Thus, after a laborious excursion into the provinces of philosophy and theology, the philosophical divine must return back to the first elements of logic and grammar, that treat of the modes of speech; and, from the combination of time, place, circumstances, the nature of the testament, or last will of a man on the eve of his death (but a man who united in the same person, the sinless weakness of humanity, with the power and nature of the Godhead), determine whether he spoke in a literal or figurative sense. For place and body, matter and space, are incomprehensible riddles which the greatest philosophers are at a loss how to unravel. The sensations of cold, hunger, thirst, pain, and pleasure, convince us sufficiently that we have bodies, whose daily decay we are continually repairing with sleep and aliment. We are, in like manner, convinced that there is such a thing as *place*, when we remove from the fire-side to bed, where, locked up in the close arms of sleep, we are for a while in an intermediate state

state between life and death; dreaming sometimes that we are sovereigns, swaying the sceptre of authority; and at other times, trembling under the hand of the executioner, who has the axe in his hand to sever the head from the body, or the rope to strangle us; alternately enjoying the grandeur of kings, and undergoing the punishment of criminals, without the reality of either. The different impressions we receive from the sun, moon, and stars, scorching flames, and refreshing springs, make us believe that there are other bodies in nature, besides those frail machines we carry about us.

In a word, sensations from within, and impressions from without, concur to convince us that there are places and bodies. The arguments of divines, and the severity of human laws, in support of those arguments, consigning those bodies to prison, death, banishment, or hunger, are collateral proofs that we have those bodies, and that we feel their existence by means of painful sensations. Yet the immortal Berkely, bishop of Cloyne, has proved by arguments hitherto unanswerable, that there is no demonstration for the existence of one single body in nature. He has reconciled the Catholic and Protestant philosophers and divines, about the real presence, by cutting off, at one blow, both *body* and *place*.

Our whole life, according to this system, adopted by several learned men, is but one continual scene of delusion. Objects we never saw, during the day-time, are present to us in our sleep, and make a deep and lasting impression. Who knows, then, but all the actions we perform, when we imagine ourselves awake, are real dreams? We are spirits created millions of years before the Mosaic account.

In that pre-existent state, we gloried too much in our knowledge; and, as a just punishment, we are given up for a short time to dreams and deceptions, not on earth, or in corruptible bodies, for there are no such things, and whoever says there are such things, can never prove his assertion: but the great theatre on which we play the sportive farce, is nothing else than God's immensity, which can never fall within the reach of corporeal organs, eyes, ears, hands, &c: for the existence of such organs is a mere delusion.

Origenes, the most learned of the fathers, who wrote six thousand books, and was complimented by Porphyry, the heathen philosopher, was of opinion, that the souls of men were angels, who, in the great conflict between the good and bad spirits, observed a strict neutrality, and were doomed to corruptible bodies, in order to try their sincerity. Had Origenes
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been as well versed in philosophy, as our modern writers, he would have confined himself to spirits, and granted bodies no existence in the class of beings.

Happy for millions were the philosophers system founded in reality, and that we had no bodies! For the disputes of theologians have destroyed and famished a good part of the creation. We have every respect for the Christian religion and its ministers of all denominations, and without any doubt, for that system in which we have had the happiness of being reared up. But we are extremely sorry that religion has ever been made a pretext for persecution or oppression.

We have taken the liberty, in the course of this treatise, to glance at some religious as well as philosophical systems, to shew the weakness of reason, and the impossibility of establishing universal orthodoxy.

Should this treatise fall into the hands of any of our legislators, in whose power it is to ease the necks of their inoffensive subjects from the galling yoke of oppression; we expect from their wisdom and feelings, that they will no longer consider difference in religion as a sufficient reason for hindering the young gentleman from purchasing a pair of colours, and fighting
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the battles of his king and country; the industrious citizen from realizing the fruits of his labour, in getting landed security for his money, and purchasing an estate, descendible to his children; the physician, the opulent farmer, the man of property, from carrying a gun, a sword, a case of pistols, for their defence from the attacks of the midnight assassin or highwayman; the clergyman, who insills the principles of good morals into the minds of the ignorant who would follow the fierce instinct of savage and uncultivated nature if they were deprived of their pastors, from the protection of the laws, which now leave them exposed to the caprice and fury of every ruffian, in whose power it is to shut up their chapels, and get them transported: When it is obvious that such restraints arise from speculative points disputed on a narrow ridge by the greatest men the world has ever produced,—when philosophers themselves are bewildered in their notions,—and when the learned are at variance, about matters far beyond the reach of the bulk of mankind.

Should it be said that these laws are seldom put in force; it can be answered that the liberty of the subject, which is the birth-right of man, should not depend on the capricious benevolence of his neighbour. The law should be the common mother whose arms should be open to all :

all: and the ghost of intolerance, more destructive than Attila's sword, should vanish on the approach of the rays of benevolence, which are now blazing all over the continent. Attila's sword destroyed but such as it met in its way: but the rage of religious feuds has thinned the world of fifty millions of human beings; and is still trampling, in these kingdoms, on compassion, on equity, on national interest.

In Ireland, where such scandalous scenes have not been exhibited, as last year in Scotland and England, the ghosts of those legislators who enacted the penal code, are still looking, with a clouded, malevolent joy, over the long wastes and desolated pastures they have made in a fruitful country; and supplying the want of the sword and fagot, with a more lasting and tedious torment,—I mean, the hunger and distresses of thousands.

The liberality of the times, the interest of the kingdom, the wisdom and humanity of our rulers, every thing cries aloud for the repeal of laws enacted on the score of conscience. If subordination and policy require what, in every country, is called a religion of state, though in fact an encroachment on the natural rights of man, when it excludes him from the privileges to which he is entitled by nature: yet this
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happy system of toleration could be introduced by excluding in this kingdom the Catholics from any high offices under the crown : secondly, from the privilege of sitting in the senate : thirdly, if the use of arms gives any umbrage, from the privilege of carrying them, except to such as have a mind to serve their country in the army, or such persons as are possessed of a real or personal estate, amounting to whatever value the legislature thinks fit to determine : all other laws, heretofore enacted, to be null and void. The kingdom would soon flourish : and the brilliant example, set to such princes as have not as yet thrown open the gates of toleration, would rescue mankind from the heavy yoke which misconstrued religion has laid on their necks.

The Author of nature intended men for society ; and entitles every man to the advantages of that condition, who is free from all principles and practices injurious to the *civil good* of society. The great Giver alone can repeal the universal charter. He has not done it : and I hope that I have sufficiently proved that he has not delegated that power to any of his creatures.

The rulers of the earth, whether Catholics or Protestants, owe all social benefits to their loyal subjects of every denomination. If one of these
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powers withhold their people's native rights, it is no excuse for the other, that their conduct is countenanced by their neighbour's example. Honour, humanity, and the rights of mankind, should suggest to modern legislators to repair the losses, caused by their predecessors misguided zeal. And as the clergy of all denominations, consider themselves as the delegates of heaven, and invested with the commission to prescribe a mode of worship to man, let them propose it in a manner that may secure its triumph over the heart; brighten it up with the genial rays of humanity, benevolence, and love, and not cloud it with the fullen gloom of severity, oppression, and distress. For Christ who is the Creator of all, has not declared in his gospel, that one should be excluded from the protection of the laws, and persecuted for his worship; and the other authorized to famish, starve, and insult the weakness of a fellow creature.

POPE GANGANELLI's

THOUGHTS ON TOLERATION.

THE great misfortune in this case, is, that some people confound religion with her ministers, and make her responsible for their faults. It never was religion, but false zeal pretending to imitate her, that seized fire and sword to compel heretics to abjure their errors, and Jews to become Christians. There were formerly in the bosom of the Church false zealots who contended for things not interesting to the faith, of whom ecclesiastical history furnishes many examples *sufficient to make us tremble*. For what is more dreadful than to see good men fall victims to a zeal, displeasing in the sight of God, and condemned by the Church, as equally hateful to religion, and the rights of society. The practice of Jesus Christ, who, during his residence on earth, bore patiently with the Sadducees and Samaritans, the Infidels and Schismatics of those times, obliges us to support our brethren of whatever communion they be, to
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live peaceably with them, and not to torment them on account of any system of belief they have adopted. If we forcibly enlist men into the Church, we shall only make them prevaricators and hypocrites. The power of the Church is *purely spiritual*; and this is so true, that the first Christians suffered themselves to be butchered, rather than rebel against the edicts of the heathen Emperors: and our blessed Redeemer himself, when he prayed for his executioners, taught us how his cause is to be avenged. Had the ministers of the gospel been always careful to follow that divine model, the enemies of Christianity had not been able to bring against it the unjust reproach of being a persecutor. The Church always disavowed those impetuous men, who stirred up by indiscreet zeal, treat those who go astray with asperity: and its most holy Bishops, in all times, solicited the pardon of apostates, desiring only their conversion. Men therefore ought not to impute to the Church, those excesses of which history has preserved the memory, and which are repugnant to the maxims of the Gospel. Ganganelli, Lett. 5. 4. See his discourse on the spirit of the Church, and on Religion.

Some

Some of my readers cannot be persuaded that the Inquisition has been abolished in Spain. For their satisfaction, I give them the following extract from the Annual Register,

“ The King of Spain has at length stripped the Inquisition of those powers which rendered it odious and terrible. It will for the future be little more than a college of enquiry into religious matters. Its jurisdiction and prisons are taken from it, and those powers happily restored to the civil tribunals. This measure will have an extraordinary effect in promoting arts, manufactures, commerce, and learning. Spain, in future, will be a secure and happy residence to strangers.” Annual Register for the year 1774, page 39.

“ The regency of Milan has given a late instance of that general disposition to reduce the powers of the Church, by abolishing for ever the tribunal of the Inquisition in that Dutchy, and appropriating its estates for the support of an Hospital of Orphans.” Annual Register, page 149, for the year 1775.

F I N I S.



ADVERTISEMENT.

SEVERAL persons requested I would give a history of the London riots: I promised to undertake the task, and in consequence began to digest my materials. I afterwards reflected, that the duty of the historian, bound him to arraign at the impartial tribunal of truth, both men and actions; unmask the leading characters; examine into their motives; lay open the hidden springs of proceedings, whether worthy of applause, or deserving to be doomed to censure; embellish his narrative with suitable reflections; and, by spreading the wide theatre, without respect to time or persons, inform the living, and become the monitor of the unborn. I afterwards considered my own state, exposed, in consequence of the penal laws, to the insult of every ruffian; and, comparing the defenceless situation of the priest with the duty of the historian, I dropped the attempt.

No person is obliged to write a history; but when he writes it he must tell the truth: and when we tell the truth in talking of the living, it is hard to avoid giving offence.

If my correspondents be not satisfied with this apology, let them point out a method whereby I can remove the difficulty, and I shall publish a history of the riots, in London itself, with my name to it: for I disclaim anonymous productions.

